THE

HIGHLANDS OF ÆTHIOPIA

DESCRIBED,

DURING EIGHTEEN MONTHS' RESIDENCE

OF

A British Embassy

AT

THE CHRISTIAN COURT OF SHOA.

Excitet Dominus Optimus Maximus Principum nostrorum animos, ut pervetustæ huic Christianæ nationi opem ferant, Christianismo in tam remotis mundi partibus proferendo utilem, sibique omni ævo gloriosam futuram.

LUDOLFI, *Hist. Æthiop.*

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KING SAHELA SELLASSIE

THE

HIGHLANDS OF ÆTHIOPIA.

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THE

HIGHLANDS OF ÆTHIOPIA,

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CHAPTER I.

THE HOUSE OF SOLOMON.

ÆTHIOPIA is the classical appellation for Abyssinia, or Hábesh, the most ancient as well as the greatest monarchy in Africa. It is by the latter title that the inhabitants themselves, and all their circumjacent neighbours, still distinguish the highlands included between Nubia and the sources of the blue Nile; and the limits of the Christian empire, governed by the sovereigns of Axum, formerly extended over wide tracts of country, now peopled by heathen and stranger nations.

The early history of Hábesh is lost in the fogs of

fable. In the Chronicles styled Kebra za Negest, "the glory of the kings," a romance which pretends to be a faithful repository of the past, Ittopia is modestly stated to have divided with Romia the dominion of the world, received in direct inheritance from Adam.—"Their rulers were both descended from Shem, who was nominated the lineal descendant of Noah, whence all the globe north of Jerusalem belonged unto the former, and all south to the latter!"

This record is believed to have been discovered in the church of St. Sophia, and it claims for the present royal family descent from the queen of Sheba, whose visit to king Solomon is stated to have placed the sceptre in the hands of the tribe of Judah, with whom it has remained until the present day; and from the peasant to the despot this legend is firmly believed by every native of Abyssinia.

"The queen of Æthiopia," saith the Chronicle, "whose name was Maqueda, had heard from the merchant Tamerin of the wisdom and the glory of king Solomon;" and resolving to visit him in his own country, she proceeded to the land of Israel with all the rich presents that her empire could afford."

After a season the royal lady returned; and her son Menilek, the result of her visit to the greatest potentate of the age, was born, and in due time transmitted to his august sire, that he might be

duly instructed in all the mysteries of Jewish law and science. Having been anointed king under the name of David, he returned to his native land, with a large suite of the nobles of Israel, and a band of her most learned elders under the direction of Ascarias, the son of Zadok the High Priest.

But previously to his setting out, the gates of the temple of Jerusalem were left unguarded, and the doors miraculously opened in order to afford an opportunity, which was not neglected, of stealing and carrying away the holy ark of Zion and the tables of the law. To queen Maqueda also is attributed the inhuman treatment since experienced by the royal princes, for on resigning the reins of authority to her son, about nine hundred and seventy years before the birth of Christ, she caused a solemn obligation to be sworn by all, that henceforward no female should hold sway in the land; and that those princes of the blood-royal upon whom the crown did not devolve, should, until the succession opened to them, or during their natural term of existence, be kept close prisoners on a lofty mountain; a cruel and despotic enactment, which, through a long succession of ages, was jealously observed.

The Emperor of Æthiopia early adopted the title of Negoos, or Negásh; and the coast of the Indian ocean towards Sofala was held by his deputy with the style of Bahr Negásh, "the King of the Sea,"—a vicegerent with the same title, governing Ye-

men, which from the earliest times down to the Mohammadan conquest of Arabia belonged to Abyssinia. The family of Menilek ibn Hákim are stated in the Kebra za Negest to have worn the crown in uninterrupted felicity until the year of our Lord 960, when an event occurred which nearly obliterated that dynasty, and first spread anarchy, violence, and oppression throughout the once happy realm.

Christianity became the national religion of Abyssinia in the beginning of the fourth century. The Fálashas, descendants of the Jews, who are believed to have accompanied Menilek from Jerusalem, had meanwhile waxed extremely powerful, and refusing to abandon the faith of their forefathers, they now declared independence. Electing a sovereign of their own creed, they took possession of the almost impregnable mountain fastnesses of Simien, where their numbers were augmented by continual accessions from the Jews who were expelled from Palestine and from Arabia. Under the constant titles of Gideon and Judith, a succession of kings and queens held a limited sway until, in the middle of the tenth century, the Princess Esther, styled, by the Amhára, Issát, which signifies "fire," a woman of extraordinary beauty and talent, conceived the design of subverting the religion, and with it the existing order of succession in the empire. A fatal epidemic had swept off the Emperor, and spread desolation through court

and capital. Del Naad, who had been nominated to the crown, was of tender years; and Esther, deeming no opportunity more favourable, surprised the rock Dámo, on which, by virtue of the existing statute, the other scions of the royal house were confined, and having massacred the whole, five hundred in number, proclaimed herself the queen over Abyssinia.

The sole surviving prince of his race was hurried by the Amhára nobility into the distant and loyal province of Shoa; and the reins of government passed into the hands of a Christian family of Lasta, styled Zegue, with whom they remained until the thirteenth century. During the administration of Naakweto Laab, the last of this dynasty, Tekla Hamïanót the monk, a native of Abyssinia, was created Abuna[1], or Primate of Æthiopia. He had previously founded in Shoa the celebrated monastery of Debra Libanos, and was a man celebrated alike for the purity of his life, the soundness of his understanding, and his devotion to his country. Obtaining extraordinary influence over the mind of the king, he prevailed upon him, for conscience-sake, to resign a crown which could never be purified from the stain of usurpation. The banished line of Solomon, content with the dominion of Shoa, had made no effort towards the recovery of their ancient boundaries; but by a treaty now concluded, Yekweno Amlak was re-

[1] Abuna, or more properly Aboon, signifies "our father."

stored to the throne of his ancestors. Naakweto Laab was to retain Lasta in perpetual independence, with the golden stool, the silver kettle-drums, and other insignia of royalty, whilst one third of the realm was permanently ceded to the Primate for the maintenance of his ecclesiastical dignity, and for the support of the clergy, convents, and churches. This was styled the "Era of Partition;" and it formed a stipulation, that the functions of Archbishop should in future be vested in none save a Copt, appointed from Caïro by the chair of St. Mark.

CHAPTER. II.

THE LINEAGE OF SHOA.

THUS affairs continued until the sixteenth century, when the invasion of Mohammad Graan led to the total dismemberment of the Æthiopic empire; and Shoa, amongst other of the richer provinces, was overrun and colonized by the Galla hordes. Nebla Dengel, the emperor of Gondar, fell by the hand of the Moslem conqueror. Fáris, the son of Dilbonach, by a daughter of the house of Solomon, held a Ras-ship under the crown, in the strong-hold of Dair, and from his son Sumbeliete sprang Nagási, the first monarch of Efát, who was born at Amad Wásha, the capital of Agamcha, and a century and a half ago held his capital in Mans. Prior to the conquest of that province, which was followed by the gradual subjugation of Shoa and its present dependencies, this prince occupied a lofty fortress in the Yedjow country, where some of his descendants still remain. From it are visible the high and impregnable mounts Ambásel and Geshama; the latter of which fastnesses, in the more remote periods of Æthiopic splendour, had served as a place of confinement

for the younger brothers of the reigning emperor; whilst the former is in the hands of an independent ruler, whose ancestress becoming the mistress of the Christian governor, the father of the Delilah contrived, during the celebration of her nuptials, to surprise the garrison, and put every man to the sword.

Nagási repaired in due time to Gondar, to be formally invested by the Emperor; but after receiving at the royal hands twelve "nugáreet," he died suddenly. To one of his four sons he bequeathed on his death-bed a shield, to a second a spear, to a third a ring, and to Sabastiye, his favourite child, a war-steed which he had always ridden to the combat. The youths were summoned to court in order that they might receive their legacies; and on opening an amulet attached to the horse's neck, it was found to contain the will and testament of the deceased, nominating Sabastiye the successor to his possessions.

This prince reigned twenty-five years, and was succeeded by Abiyé, his eldest son, who after fifteen years was gathered to his fathers at Arámba, which he had wrested from the Aréeo Galla. Emmaha Yasoos, who succeeded next, and reigned thirty-two years, introduced several matchlocks from Gondar, conquered Ankóber, and removed his capital thither from Dokáket. At the period of his accession, the sorcerers predicted that if one Arkarádis should be appointed minister, the empire would be doubled.

Diligent search was made throughout the realm, but a mendicant was the sole individual of that name who could be found. He was duly inducted into office; and his first step was to revive among the circumjacent Galla an ancient prophecy, that when fires should be seen on the summits of the three loftiest peaks of the great barrier range, their possessions would be overrun by the Christians. After the lapse of a few months, Arkarádis caused beacon-fires to be kindled during the night on the crests of Kondie, Ankóber, and Mamrat; upon beholding which many of the heathen fled, and without a blow being struck, sundry districts were appended to Shoa.

Asfa Woosen, grandsire to the reigning monarch, succeeded to his father Emmaha Yasoos, and reigned thirty-three and a half years. Of forty-eight male children he was the bravest. He was a great Nimrod, and an unparalleled warrior, slaying three hundred Pagans with his own spear from the back of his favourite war steed Amádoo. Amongst many other despotic laws enacted during his reign, was one prohibiting the manufacture of hydromel by the subject. Three great rebellions threatened the stability of his empire, which had now shaken off all allegiance to Gondar, but each in turn was quelled by his personal valour. The last insurrection was headed by Woosen Suggud, the heir-apparent. In a pitched battle the youth was wounded by the hand of his father, taken prisoner,

and immured throughout the term of the monarch's life. During the last fifteen years of his reign, Asfa Woosen was totally blind. It is fully believed that the sight of one eye was destroyed by Thavánan, as already narrated in the legend of "the tormentor," and that one of the royal concubines, whom that sorcerer had spirited away, destroyed the other shortly afterwards, by means of a powerful spell imparted by her paramour.

Since the commencement of the present century, the custom of consigning to a dungeon the brothers and kindred of the reigning monarch has fallen into desuetude in Northern Abyssinia. The princes of the blood-royal now wander over the country unmolested and unheeded, attaching themselves to any chief who may be willing to extend countenance and support, and holding themselves at his disposal in the event of his gaining ascendancy over his rivals, and requiring a titular emperor to perform the indispensable ceremony of nominating a Ras. But the form is still retained, of placing the crown upon the brows of a descendant of the ancient line of Solomon, who is content to be a mere puppet in the hands of the temporary minister; and enjoying a stipend of three hundred dollars per annum, with the paltry revenues accruing from the tolls of the hebdomadal market in the capital, he remains a prisoner upon parole in his palace at Gondar.

CHAPTER III.

THE MONARCH AND THE COURT.

SÁHELA SELÁSSIE, "the clemency of the Trinity," seventh king of Shoa, whose surname is Menilek, was twelve years of age when the assassination of Woosen Suggud called him from a monastery to the throne, and placed in his hands the reins of despotic government over a wild Christian nation. His sire had enjoyed a brief, but exceedingly active reign of four and a half years, during which he extended his empire far beyond the limits bequeathed to him by Asfa Woosen—made conquests in the south to the mountains of Garra Gorphoo, and in the west to the Nile. The most despotic measures marked his transient but iron rule; and had he survived, the expectations formed of him would in all probability have been realized, and he would have become monarch of all Abyssinia. But the nation groaned under his oppression; and after a series of the harshest acts, induced by visits in disguise, like those of Haroun Alraschid, the great Kaliph of Bagdad, to the houses of his subjects, and to places of public resort, a Shankela slave, whom he had provoked by ill usage, turned upon his royal master, and having slain him with a sword, set fire to the palace

at Kondie, which was burned to the ground; and the wealth amassed in many earthen jars melted, according to the tradition, into a liquid stream of mingled silver and gold, which flowed over the mountain side.

In Shoa, as in other savage countries, the tidings of the dissolution of the monarch, unless timely concealed, spread like lightning to the furthest extremities of the kingdom, and become a signal for rapine, anarchy, and murder, which rage unrestrained during the continuance of the interregnum. Every individual throughout the realm deems himself at full liberty to act according to the bent of his own vicious inclinations—to perpetrate every atrocity, and to indulge in the gratification of every revengeful and licentious passion, without fear of retribution or of punishment; and it being perfectly understood that there exists neither law nor rule until the new sovereign shall have been proclaimed, the kingless land for a season runs rivers of blood. Fearful was the tragedy that followed the assassination of Woosen Suggud. The royal family residing at Ankóber, and the heir-apparent at a still greater distance from Kondie, there ensued a scene of anarchy and confusion which it would be difficult to describe; and at Debra Libanos alone there fell no fewer than eight hundred victims to private animosity, of whose murder no account was ever taken.

The eyes of the monarch being closed in death,

the minister styled Dedj Agafári, "the introducer through the door," proceeds to the inauguration of the successor, who, unless some other arrangement shall have been willed, is usually the heir-apparent. Presented to the senators and to the inmates of the palace, the herald proclaims aloud, "We have reason to mourn, and also to rejoice, for our old father is dead, but we have found a new one." The accession thus declared, the king is invested with the robes of state, and taking seat upon the throne, the public officers first in order, and then the people, offer homage, and bow before his footstool.

General mourning is invariably observed during the seven days which follow the promulgation of the national calamity. Men, women, and children, evince their grief by tearing the hair, scarifying the temples with the nails, and casting themselves sobbing and screaming upon the ground—the good qualities of the deceased being extolled the while. But the chief mourners on the melancholy occasion are those princes of the blood-royal who are affected by the barbarous practice handed down from the earliest periods of Abyssinian history. For in the kingdom of Shoa revolutionary projects against the crown have invariably been anticipated by consigning the uncles and brothers of the sovereign to a subterranean dungeon, where they pass the remainder of their days in the elaborate carving of harps and ornaments of ivory.

Widely different from that of the aspiring Rasselas is the lot of these pining members of the dynasty of Shoa. No happy valley is theirs, whom a barbarous policy has from time immemorial condemned thus to linger in hopeless imprisonment during the remnant of their sublunary pilgrimage, unless the demise of the despot without issue should, peradventure, call some one of the captives from the dank vault to the throne. Food, with scanty materials for amusement and occupation, are indeed allowed, together with permission to breathe the air of heaven after the sun has set upon their own green hills. But no domestic tie links them to the society from which they are immured—no sympathy of wife or child can ever, by a word of kindness, alleviate their lonely condition. The bonds of relationship have been rudely snapped asunder, and the very name of brother is the stern curse of those whose only crime is their affinity to the monarch.

Seven princes of the blood-royal were inmates of the vaults of Góncho on the arrival of the British Embassy in Shoa. The legitimate issue male of the reigning sovereign has fortunately been limited to two; but it was not the less melancholy to reflect, that one or other of these interesting youths must, in all human probability, drag out the noon and evening of his days within the walls of that dismal dungeon, where so many have sunk into the grave unrecorded and unpitied. The crown, although hereditary in the house of Solomon, is elective by

will at each decease, and the eldest born can assert no exclusive title to succession by right of primogeniture. Bashakh Woorud, "go down if go like," is an ominous title enough to distinguish the heir-apparent to the throne. Better known by his Christian appellation of Hailoo Mulakoot, and now in his sixteenth year, he has by his royal sire been permitted to accompany the army into the field, when he slew some of the Galla with his own hand; but entertaining a predilection for the church, he is educating in the monastery of Loza; whilst his brother, Seifa Selássie, "the sword of the Trinity," who is three or four years younger, is the favourite of his father, and may be regarded as the heir-presumptive.

In accordance with the custom of the land, this prince is also secluded in a monastery, at Medák, under the Alaka Amda Zion. In addition to a eunuch and a nurse, each of the royal scions is attended by guardians, whose office it is to prevent his playing truant or creating disturbances in the kingdom. They are trained to equestrian and warlike exercises, and to the use of the shield and spear; and are made to attend divine service, to fast, to repeat their prayers, and to peruse the psalms at night. Their course of education differs little from that of other Abyssinian youths, than whom they are even more under monkish influence. The study of the Gebata Hawáriat, or "table of the apostles," which comprises the seven epistles of

Peter, John, James, and Jude, and the acquisition of the Psalter by heart, is followed by the perusal of the Revelation, the epistles of St. Paul, and the gospels—the histories of the Holy Virgin, of Saints George and Michael, Saint Tekla Haïmanót, and others, completing the course. Few of the priesthood understand the art of writing, and all regard the exercise of the pen as shameful and derogatory. The royal princes therefore stand little chance of instruction in this branch of education, and their acquaintance with the Abyssinian code of jurisprudence must depend also upon the erudition of their preceptors. The strictest discipline is enforced; disobedience is punished by bonds and corporal chastisement, which latter the king causes to be inflicted in his presence; and fully imbued with the conviction that to "spare the rod is to spoil the child," His Majesty occasionally corrects the delinquent with his own hands.

Queen Besábesh—"thou hast multiplied"—the mother of the young princes, and also of four princesses, is the daughter of the last independent ruler of Morabeitie. She was relict of Tekla Georgis, a commoner of Shoa; and although not permanently resident in the palace, is much beloved by Sáhela Selássie. Five hundred concubines complete the royal harem, of whom seven reside under the palace roof, thirteen in the immediate outskirts, and the residue in various parts of the empire. By these ladies the king has a numerous progeny; the males,

who are not obnoxious to imprisonment on a new accession, being created governors of provinces, whilst the illegitimate daughters are bestowed in marriage upon whomsoever his despotic Majesty may think proper to select among the nobles and magnates of the land.

The ceremony of taking into the royal harem a concubine of rank, which measure is usually connected with some political object, consists in an interchange of presents betwixt the monarch and the parents of the damsel. Chámie, the Galla Queen of Moolo Fálada, near the Nile, presented with her daughter, who occupies a niche in the harem, a dower consisting of two hundred milch cows, one hundred teams of oxen with ploughs, a number of horses, and many slaves of both sexes, *gássela* skins, and other choice peltries, and five hundred vessels of virgin honey, with twelve cats to watch over and protect them from the inroads of the mice. Mohammadans and Pagans are compelled, after the formation of the royal alliance, to embrace the Christianity of Æthiopia; but that fidelity is far from being a consequence of the conversion has been evinced in numerous disgraceful instances, the not least notorious of which involves the reputation and the health of one who long enjoyed a most exalted place in the king's affections—a sister of Wulásma Mohammad.

Throughout intra-tropical Africa the *nugáreet*, or kettle-drum, forms the emblem of power, as does

the sceptre in other realms. Appointments, edicts, and proclamations, roll with its notes to the ears of the attentive nation of Shoa. It accompanies all forays and campaigns, is the symbol of investiture, and even the Church is controlled by its echoes reverberating from the palace hill. The trumpet is also a concomitant on state occasions, when two large crimson *debáboch*, or aftabgirs, screen the royal person. The attire of Sáhela Selássie, although usually plain and unassuming, is, on certain pageants, more imposing, and is then assisted by all the gold and tinsel that the wardrobe can boast. The precious metal, for which he entertains a vast affection, forming his exclusive prerogative, is displayed in massive bracelets and rings, and in the embroidery with which his tight vest of green silk is profusely loaded, although partially hidden beneath the enveloping robe of Abyssinia. His Majesty's crown is an elegantly embossed tiara, with numerous chains hanging in gorgeous clusters around the brow, and surmounted by the imperial plume of white egret feathers.

On the Saturday in Passion week, a solemn assembly is held in the palace court, which is decked out with carpets, and velvets, and gay cloths. The priests then rehearse the military achievements of the monarch, and the gathered population respond with the loud hum of approbation; but with this exception, and that of the great annual review at the feast of Máskal, or the triumphal return from

the successful foray against the heathen Galla, there is little pomp or pageant to be witnessed at the present day. Badges and honorary distinctions, however, still continue to be conferred upon the brave in war. The high-sounding titles of household officers are yet scrupulously retained; and these, with the embossed shield, the silver sword, the gauntlet, the bracelet, the armlet, and the glittering *akodáma*, attest the presence at the court of Shoa of the last remnant of the ancient, but faded grandeur of the proud emperors of Æthiopia.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REIGNING DESPOT.

A MORE singular contrast of good and evil was perhaps never presented than in the person and administration of the Christian despot. Avarice, suspicion, caprice, duplicity, and superstition, appear to form the basis of his chequered character, and his every act exhibits a proportion of meanness and selfishness, linked with a desire to appear munificent. Yet are these radically bad ingredients tempered and concealed by some amiable and excellent qualities. His virtues are many as they are conspicuous: his faults entail harm chiefly upon himself; and the appropriation of the greater portion of his hours might be held up as a worthy pattern for imitation.

During the entire forenoon of every day in the week, the Sabbath and Saturday excepted, which latter, as a remnant of Jewish religion, is universally reverenced, is he engaged in public affairs—in trying appeals, and in deciding suits which are brought from all quarters of his dominions. Notwithstanding the impediments offered by a weak constitution, and by many bodily infirmities prematurely brought on by excess, he leads a life of

constant activity, and, both as respects his public and his private avocations, stands greatly distinguished above other Abyssinian rulers, who too justly incur the reproach of idleness and perpetual debauchery.

After the religious performance of his matin devotions, the king inspects his stables and workshops, bestows charity upon the assembled poor, despatches couriers, and accords private audiences of importance. Then reclining in state upon the throne, he listens for hours to all appeals brought against the decisions of his judges, and adjusts in public the tangled disputes and controversies of his subjects. Here access is easy. Sáhela Selássie listens to all, foreigners or natives, men and women, rich and poor. Every one possesses the right to appear before him, and boldly to explain the nature of his case; and although the established usage of the land compels the subject to prostrate himself, and to pay rather adoration than respect, yet may he urge his complaint without the least hesitation or timidity. Judgment is always prompt, and generally correct; nor will the observer be less struck with the calmness and placidity that mark the royal demeanour in the midst of the most boisterous discussions, than at the method and perspicuity with which such manifold affairs are disposed of; and whilst thus receiving the most favourable impression of His Majesty's capacity for the transaction of business, a parallel might be drawn between his de-

meanour and that of many more civilized monarchs, which would be flattering to the semi-barbarous ruler of Shoa.

At three o'clock the king proceeds to dine alone; and no sooner is the royal appetite appeased, than the doors are thrown open, and the long table in the great banqueting-hall is crowded with distinguished warriors and guests. Harpers and fiddlers perform during the entire entertainment, and singers lift up their voices in praise of the munificence and liberality of their sovereign, who, during all this scene of confusion and turmoil, still continues to peruse letters or to issue instructions, until the board has been thrice replenished and as often cleared, and until all of a certain rank have freely partaken of his hospitality. At five he retires with a few of those who enjoy the largest share of intimacy, to the private apartments. Prayers and potent liquors fill up the evening hours, and the company depart, leaving the favourite page who is made the bearer of the royal commands.

Midnight calls His Majesty from his couch to the perusal of psalms and sacred writings. A band of sturdy priests in the antechamber continue during the livelong night to chant a noisy chorus of hymns to preserve his slumbers from the influence of evil spirits or apparitions, and daylight brings a repetition of the busy scene, which is diversified by exercise on horseback, whenever leisure and the fickle sky will permit. Making excursions with from four

to five hundred mounted followers, it is then his wont to sit for hours on the splashy banks of some sequestered brook, conversing familiarly with those about him, witnessing the exercise of his stud, and devoting every spare moment to the numerous petitioners who crowd with complaints around the royal person.

Dreading the fate of his father, the monarch never stirs from his threshold without a pistol concealed under his girdle along with his favourite amulet, in which he reposes implicit faith and reliance. His couch is nightly surrounded by tried and trusty warriors, endeared to his person by munificence displayed to no other class of his subjects, whilst the gates of the palace are barred after the going down of the sun, and stoutly guarded.

The principal officers of the royal household, and those most confided in by the suspicious monarch, are the eunuchs. Ayto Baimbot, their late chief, was specially charged with the royal harem, in all its branches, as well as with the establishment of slaves. Long faithfully attached to his indulgent master, he was, whilst he lived, the king's only intimate counsellor, and was never separated from his person.

Next in order is the herald, or Dech Agafári, who, in addition to the important duties already detailed, is the channel through whom all new appointments by the crown and all royal edicts and proclamations are published to the nation.

Armed with a rod of green rushes, he ushers into the presence-chamber all officials, strangers, and visiters, introducing at the appointed time those who have complaints or representations to lay at the footstool of the throne. He is the Alaka of all who have any boon to crave, and is in charge of the host of pages and younger sons of the nobility who attend upon the king—is in general master of the ceremonies on occasions of state or pageant, and introduces guests who may be invited to the banquet.

The keys of the royal library are in the custody of the chief of the Church, the Alaka Wolda Georgis, a layman and a soldier, who was elevated to the exalted post he occupies in direct violation of the established usage of the country. The office of chief smith and Alaka of all the *tabiban*, "wise people," or handicraftsmen, throughout the realm, and of Body Physician, are concentrated in the person of Ayto Habti, who must freely partake of all drugs that are to be administered to the king, and, with the Commander-in-Chief of the Body-guard, the Master of the Horse, and the dwarf Father Confessor, be in constant attendance upon His Majesty.

As well from religious as from worldly motives, Sáhela Selássie entertains a vast number of pensioners, who receive *dirgo*, or daily rations, in various proportions—some being limited to dry bread, whilst others extend to mead, the greatest

luxury which the country can afford. The distribution of this maintenance comes exclusively within the province of the Purveyor-General, the food being prepared in the royal kitchen by the numerous slaves, who, shame to the Christian monarch, compose the entire household establishment. All foreigners and visiters receive it; and, in addition to about one thousand of this class, there are many besides who possess the privilege of always dining at the royal table.

Making munificent donations to churches and monasteries, the king stands in high odour with the fanatic clergy, and thus enjoys the advantage of their influence over the priest-ridden population, whom he rules principally through the church; and, never undertaking any project without consulting some of its members, is in turn much swayed by their exhortations, prophecies, dreams, and visions. Strongly attached to the Christianity of Æthiopia, which abounds in Jewish prejudices, he is still far from being intolerant. According to the best of his uncultivated ideas he encourages letters, and spends considerable sums of money in collecting ancient manuscripts. Possessing natural talents and shrewdness, which have been improved by the rudiments of education, he rules his hereditary dominions with tact and advantage; and might, had his energies been properly directed, have shone one of the greatest potentates that ever wielded the sceptre in the now disorganized empire.

Were the active life of Sáhela Selássie guided by superior principles—could he be brought to despise petty things, and to sink the details of unimportant affairs in matters of greater moment—how wealthy and powerful a monarch might he not still become! He would have time at command to plan truly royal projects; and, possessed as he is of means the most ample, would find leisure to carry through his designs. Although, like other rulers of Abyssinia, he is ever entertaining some project of aggrandizement, his mind is yet filled with trifles, and not sufficiently expanded to mature a plan of operations upon an extended scale. Precluded by want of liberal education or of intercourse with civilized nations, from calculating events, or looking deep into the page of futurity, he lives in fact for little beyond the present day. Old in constitution, though not in years—enfeebled by excess, as well in mind as in body—uncivilized—called early to the throne, and ruling during a long succession of years according to one unvarying system—the dictates of his own caprice—he requires some violent impulse, some imminent and apparent peril, to arouse him from the torpor of security, to stimulate his latent energies to greater exertion, and to induce him temporarily to sacrifice a portion of his idolized gold, in order to reap a harvest five hundred fold.

From the merciful hand of this unique specimen of absolute authority, the sceptre falls lightly upon

the head of the offender. "I have before mine eyes the fear of God," is his frequent exclamation when passing the extreme sentence of the law. Guilty of none of the cruelties or enormities which stain most of the other rulers of Abyssinia—accessible, not easily offended, even-tempered, patient in his investigations, mild and usually just in his despotism—he is universally adored in his own dominions, rather through love than through fear. The oath by the life of the king is the only binding obligation in the land; and from the general success of his military expeditions, he is feared and respected by all the adjacent tribes. Conducting himself with that easy freedom which generally distinguishes conscious superiority, his demeanour is dignified and commanding; and the appearance of the half-civilized Christian savage, who sways the destinies of millions in the heart of heathen Africa, would proclaim his high descent even in the courts of Europe.

CHAPTER V.

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD.

THE hereditary provinces subject to Sáhela Selássie are comprised in a rectangular domain of one hundred and fifty by ninety miles, which area is traversed by five systems of mountains, whereof the culminating point divides the basin of the Nile from that of the Háwash. The Christian population of Shoa and Efát are estimated at one million of souls, and that of the Mohammadan and Pagan population of the numerous dependencies at a million and a half. Without including tribute in kind, the royal revenues are said to amount to about eighty or ninety thousand German crowns, accruing chiefly from import duties on slaves, foreign merchandize, and salt. The annual expenses of the state not exceeding ten thousand dollars, it is probable that His Christian Majesty, during his long reign of nearly thirty years, must have amassed considerable treasure, which is carefully deposited underground, and not lightly estimated by its possessor.

Nearly in the centre of the kingdom presides Zenama Work, "the golden rain," relict of Woosen

Suggud, and mother of the reigning monarch. The seat of her government, it has already been said, is at Zalla Dingai, "the rolling stone;" and she rules over nearly the whole of the north-west, or in fact over almost one half of the realm—appropriating in reversion to the crown the entire revenues of her dependent territories, and appointing her own governors with the royal approval. Judge in her own dominions, her decisions nevertheless lie under appeal to the throne; and even as queen-dowager, she is debarred participation in certain privileges which form the exclusive prerogatives of her son, over whose mind she exerts an influence, compared by the people of Shoa to that which they believe the holy Virgin to exercise over the Redeemer.

Long tired of the world and of its vanities, the venerable lady has made numerous applications for permission to retire to a convent, and assume the veil, the royal entreaties to the contrary having alone delayed the execution of the design. Many years barren, she sought the benediction of the wandering "Wáto," and her nuptial couch being shortly crowned by the birth of Prince Menilek, the happy event was ascribed to necromantic intervention Thus the tribe of the soothsayer is to this day left in peaceful occupation of its mountains on the bank of the wooded Háwash, whilst the destroying hand of the Amhára presses in wrath upon the head of the surrounding heathen.

Four hundred governors, styled *Shoomant*, are

appointed under the crown of Shoa, and these with fifty *Abogásoch*, or guardians of the frontier, literally "fathers of war," corresponding with the margraves of Germany in olden times, conduct the affairs of the kingdom and its dependencies. Some few of these appointments are hereditary; but the majority are purchased by the highest bidder, and the tenure is at best extremely precarious. A governor on his appointment is invested with a silver sword as a badge of office, and is bound to appear with his contingent of militia, whensoever summoned for military service. His grants are regulated by the amount of his levy; and as he rises in the royal estimation, so he receives badges also for subordinates, who may have distinguished themselves by their zeal, activity, or valour.

No courtier or great man can, after a long absence, approach the throne empty-handed. Thousands of stern warriors bend down with profound and slavish abasement before the fellow-mortal who presides over their sublunary destinies; and even the nobles of the land twice prostrate themselves, and kiss the dust in a manner the most abject and humiliating. All public officers make oblations from time to time in kind; and the king is, besides, in the habit of requiring arbitrarily from those in charge of districts, tribute in honey, clarified butter, cloth, or whatever else he may happen to require. Weak, and at the same time cunning—suspicious of every one, and placing not the smallest confidence in any of his

functionaries—he sometimes precipitates them from affluence into a dungeon, when they believe themselves in the enjoyment of the largest share of favour. Resolved to disgrace a nobleman, he either sends for or visits the doomed personage, treats him with marked kindness and condescension, in view to dispel alarm; and embracing a favourable moment when no resistance can be offered, gives the fiat to those in attendance to secure their prisoner.

If not retained by fees and oblations, governments are constantly forfeited and resold. Frequent changes are also made with the design of counteracting collusion and rebellion. Although the power of the Negoos is absolute, it is subdivided amongst all who execute his orders, and little despots arise in all the numerous governors of provinces—each actuated by the same desire of being the executor of his own supreme will. Still they bear a heavy responsibility, and the slightest error in judgment, or, even in the absence of all delinquency, the mere whim of the monarch, may involve them in destruction when least anticipated. Accountable for every event, whether probable or improbable, assiduity in the management of affairs does not always avail. Talents and bravery are sometimes displayed in vain, and mere caprice may hurl the possessor of both from his high estate to the deepest ruin and disgrace.

Armed with the delegated authority of the des-

pot, each governor, enacting the autocrat in his own domains, fashions his habits and privileges after those of his royal master. His fields are cultivated in the same manner, and he possesses the advantage of being able to extort from the inhabitants, for a very inadequate compensation in grain, many days of extra labour in each of the great agricultural operations. A fluctuating tribute in kind, regulated by his will and caprice, is exacted from all land-holders, to meet the demands of His Majesty, who, in addition to an inauguration fee of from four to six hundred dollars, is, unless voluntary offerings be frequently made, ever sending requisitions for live stock and farm produce. This system falls heavily upon all classes. A governor trusting to his own resources is speedily impoverished; whilst he who taxes too roughly is certain to be stripped of authority and property, on representation made to the throne.

But the Abyssinian is never loth to climb up again whence he has fallen, and the humbled grandee, although impoverished and shunned by the servile crowd, strives again to ingratiate himself with his sovereign—frequently succeeds by long and patient attendance, and once more girded with the silver sword of authority, he attains that perilous and giddy pinnacle, where the weapon of destruction hangs over his head suspended only by a single hair.

The essence of despotism pervading the land to

its very core, the Negoos is the true God of its adoration. All the best portions of the soil pertain to His Majesty, and the life as well as the property of every subject is at his sole and absolute disposal. Every act is performed with some view to promote his pleasure, and the subject waits on his sovereign will, for favour, preferment, and place All appointments are at the king's disposal—all rewards and distinctions come from the king's hand. In years of famine, food itself is only to be obtained from the royal granaries; and it is not therefore surprising that those over whom one so absolute presides should be mean, servile, and cringing, and that they should, in their aspirations after power and place, mould every action of their life according to his will.

Concealment of any acquisition, howsoever small and valueless, is invariably visited with loss of office and confiscation of property. Gold forms the exclusive privilege of royalty. Personal ornaments and coloured raiment have until now been restricted by the severest sumptuary laws, and none, except the highest chiefs and warriors of the land, were honoured by an exemption from the rule. But these harsh prohibitions, which exist under no other government in Abyssinia, originated long before the present reign, and have been enforced during so many generations, that they are now little irksome to the people.

Shoa has hitherto stood exempt from the un-

ceasing endeavours to acquire ascendancy on the part of all the various chieftains who divide the sceptre in the north—allied to-day in bonds of the closest amity, the next arrayed in the most bitter animosity. Engaged in perpetual strife, the march of any one prince beyond the border of his own territories proves the signal to the nearest of his neighbours to carry fire and sword into the heart of his undefended domain; but although torn by civil war from one extremity to the other, the bond of the ancient Æthiopic empire is still not entirely dissolved; and notwithstanding that the "king of kings" has dwindled into the mere spectre of imperial dignity—is deposed and restored to the throne at the caprice of every predominant ruler—his name at least is deemed essential to render valid the title of Ras, and through the latter, of the governors of all the dependent provinces of Abyssinia.

But herein the King of Shoa forms an exception; and fortunate it is for His Majesty as well as for his dominions, that the surrounding Galla tribes, united with natural defences, should have so completely shut him out from participation in the intestine disturbances which have ravaged and laid waste every other province of this beautiful and once prosperous land. Although he propitiates the leader of every party, and pursues a conciliatory policy, it would be in his power to mediate with a high hand for the advantage of all; yet is it curious to observe with

what tenacity the Abyssinians adhere to preconceived opinions. The kingdom of Shoa, which was formerly a portion of the empire, still continues in general estimation to form an integral part thereof; and Sáhela Selássie is, therefore, but in name only, regarded as a vassal of the puppet Emperor of Gondar, notwithstanding that he is, *de facto*, an independent monarch.

CHAPTER VI.

GALLA DEPENDENCIES IN THE SOUTH.

During the reign of Asfa Woosen, grandsire to Sáhela Selássie, the independent states of Shoa and Efát were of very inconsiderable extent. Morát, Morabeitie, Giddem, Bulga, and other districts now appended, were at that period distinct governments, as is now the case in Gurágué, where there are more rulers than provinces. It is not therefore surprising, that amid the perpetual quarrels of the Christian princes, the Galla should have been left in undisturbed possession of the lands which they had wrested from Southern Abyssinia. But no sooner had Asfa Woosen subdued King Zeddoo, the usurper of Morabeitie and Morát, with whom sank also those of inferior pretensions, than he began with his united forces to make inroads upon the Galla tribes. The unsettled state of the newly-conquered provinces precluded extensive operations; and the task of reducing the Pagans to obedience was thus principally bequeathed to Woosen Suggud, whose strong arm not only kept in submission the territories conquered by his father, but added greatly to the western limits of Shoa by the acquisition of

Moogher on the Nile, and by the conquest of the Abitchu, Wóberi, and Gillán, so far south as the mountains of Garra Gorphoo.

Conceiving that a youth who had scarcely numbered twelve years would be unable to hold them in subjection, the tributary Galla revolted immediately upon the accession of Sáhela Selássie. But subsequent events proved that they were mistaken in the estimate formed of the monarch's military capacity. He vanquished King Hailoo, who still asserted his dignity in Morát. Having amassed fire-arms from Gondar and Tigré, as well as from the sea-coast of Tajúra, he was enabled to quell many successive insurrections, and for a number of years was fortunate in the fidelity of the lion-hearted Medóko, who was even more feared than himself by the surrounding Gentiles. He caused all the Galla of the province of Shoa-Méda to be circumcised and baptized; and having commanded them to wear about their necks the "*mátеb*," or cord of blue silk, to fast, and to eat neither with Mohammadans nor Pagans, nor to touch meat that has not been killed in the name of the Holy Trinity, they have thenceforth been denominated Christians.

Throughout his long reign, it has been the king's favourite project to reunite the scattered remnants of Christian population which still mark the extent of the dominions of his forefathers. The countries to the south and south-west have therefore always received the largest share of His Majesty's attention,

and in those directions he has attacked and subdued in succession all the tribes on this side of the Háwash. The Metta, Metcha, Moolo Fálada, Betcho-Woreb, Betcho-Foogook, and Charsa-Dágha, are all appended to Shoa. Moreover the royal arms have crossed the Háwash, and to a certain extent accomplished the reduction of the Sóddo, of the frontiers of Gurágué, of the Karaiyo, Loomi, Jillé, and other remote clans. In the north little progress has been made, and many reverses have deterred further attempts upon the wild mountaineers; but in the north-east the Selmi, the Abóti, and several other tribes previously independent, have been reduced to feudal submission, and by judicious management are made to secure the frontier from invasion.

But although Sáhela Selássie has thus widely extended the limits of his empire, he has adopted no efficient measures to consolidate his conquests. As a contrast between the former and the existing administration, it is said of the southern Galla, "where all was once strength, there is now nothing save weakness. Of yore, tribute was paid by all, whereas at the present day the possession of the dependencies does but entail expense." Three annual expeditions, made, throughout a period of thirty years, for the pupose of collecting the revenues of the crown, have hitherto proved ineffectual to the preservation of permanent tranquillity amongst the tribes subjugated by his ancestors; and the Sertie lake, with other morasses, remain

monuments of the dire disasters which sometimes attend his usually successful arms. He neither erects fortifications, nor does he establish outposts; and the government being continued in heathen hands, the tributary tribes rebel during each rainy season, only to be re-subdued as soon as it is over—the insurgents sometimes tendering their renewed allegiance the instant they perceive the crimson umbrellas of state, but more frequently delaying until the locust-like army of the Amhára has swept their fair fields, and like the devastating stream from the volcano, has left a smoking desert in its train.

Chastised by two or three successful forays, the chiefs and elders of the rebellious and ruined clan, finding the futility of further opposition to the yoke, come in with the tribute exacted, and make feudal submission, whereupon they are suffered to ransom their wives and daughters, who have been enslaved. It cannot fail to appear extraordinary, that those who are unprepared for resistance should occupy their beleaguered abodes one minute after they had become aware of the presence of their ruthless and implacable foes; but in almost every instance they are in blood feud with all the surrounding tribes of their own nation, at whose merciless hands they would experience even worse treatment than at those of the Amhára. Neither, during persecution, could the tax-repudiating hope to find an asylum among tributary neighbours, with whom

they might perchance be on amicable terms, since their reception would inevitably entail on those who harboured the fugitives the last vengeance of the despot. Thus the choice is left between precarious flight to the mountain fastnesses, in the very teeth of the enemy, and the alternative of lurking in the vicinity of the invaded hamlet, upon the slender chance of eluding the keen scent of the bloodhounds.

The governor, or, in fact, the king of all the Galla now dependent on Shoa, is Abogáz Maretch, who resides at Wona badéra, south of Angollála. At first a bitter enemy of Sáhela Selássie, this haughty warrior chief, renowned for his bravery, was finally gained over by bribes, and by promises of distinction and advancement, which have actually been fulfilled. Partly by force, and partly by soft words and judicious intermarriages with chiefs of the various tribes, he contrives to keep in some sort of order the wild spirits over whom he presides; but he is taxed with want of proper severity, and although still high in favour, has more than once been suspected of divulging the royal projects.

Abba Mooállé, the governor of Moogher and of the surrounding Galla in the west, was also formerly very inimical to Shoa; but being won over to the royal interests by the espousal of his sister, by preferment to extensive power, and by the hand of one of the despotic princesses, he was four years since

converted to Christianity, when the king became his sponsor. The valuable presents which he is enabled to make to the throne, owing to his proximity to the high caravan-road from the interior, preserve him a distinguished place in the estimation of the Negoos, to whom he is little inferior in point of state. At constant war with the Galla occupying the country to the westward, between Sullála Moogher and Gojam, he hastily assembles his troops twice or thrice during the year, and making eagle-like descents across the Nile at the head of ten thousand cavalry, rarely fails to recruit the royal herds with a rich harvest in cattle.

Dogmo, who resides in the mountain of Yerrur, was educated in the palace; and his undeviating attachment to the crown has been rewarded with the hand of one of the king's illegitimate daughters. Bótha, Shámbo, and Dogmo, are the sons of Bunnie, whose father, Borri, governed the entire tract styled *Ghera Méder*, "the country on the left," which includes all the Galla tribes bordering on both sides of the Háwash in the south of Shoa. Bunnie was, in consequence of some transgression, imprisoned in Arámba; and Bótofa, another potent Galla chieftain, appointed in his stead. But this impolitic transfer of power creating inveterate hatred between the two families, each strove to destroy the other. Bunnie was in consequence liberated, and restored to his government; but resting incautiously under a tree on his return, not long afterwards, from a

successful expedition against the Aroosi, whom he had defeated, he was suddenly surrounded by the enemy, and slain, together with four chiefs, his confederates, and nearly the whole of his followers. His sons were then severally invested with governments; and Boku, the son of Bótora, was at his father's demise entrusted with the preservation of the avenues to the Lake Zooai, long an object of the royal ambition.

Among the most powerful Galla chieftains who own allegiance to Shoa, is Jhára, the son of Chámic, *soi-disant* Queen of Moolo Fálada, who, since the demise of her husband, has governed that and other provinces adjacent. Sáhela Selássie, who it will be seen relies more upon political marriages than upon the force of arms, sent matrimonial overtures to this lady, and received for answer the haughty message, "that if he would spread the entire road from Angollála with rich carpets, she might perhaps listen to the proposal, but upon no other conditions!" The Christian lances poured over the border to avenge this insult offered to the monarch of Shoa, and the invaded tribe laid down their arms; but Gobánah, foster-brother to Jhára, and a mighty man of renown, finding that His Majesty proposed burning their hamlets without reservation, rose to oppose the measure. At this critical moment an Amhára trumpeter raised his trombone to his lips. The Galla, believing the instrument to be none other than a musket, fled in consternation, and their

doughty chieftain surrendered himself a prisoner at discretion.

Upon learning to whom he had relinquished his liberty, Gobánah, broken-hearted, abandoned himself to despair, and refused all sustenance for many days. The hand of the fair daughter of the queen was eventually the price of his ransom; and on the celebration of the nuptials, the king, who, with reference to his conquest of Moolo Fálada, might have exclaimed, with the Roman dictator, "*Veni, vidi, vici,*" conferred upon Jhára the government of all the subjugated Galla as far as the sources of the Háwash, and to the Nile in the west. Warlike, daring, and ambitious, exercising his important functions almost beyond the ken of his sovereign, and possessing from his proximity to Gojam and Dámot, the means of creating himself the leader of a vast horde, there can be little doubt, although he has hitherto evinced strong attachment to the crown, that, imitating the example of all pagan chieftains who have gone before him, he will one day profit by his opportunities to take up arms against Shoa, and may thus not improbably enact a most conspicuous part in the history of the Galla nation.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GALLA NATION.

Abyssinia had long maintained her glory unsullied under an ancient line of emperors, until, in the sixteenth century, the ambitious and formidable Graan, at the head of a whole nation of Moslem barbarians, burst over the frontier, and dashed into atoms the structure of two thousand five hundred years. Defended by hireling swords, which, in a series of sanguinary conflicts, wrested the victorious wreath from the brow of the invader, and since supported rather by the memory of departed greatness than by actual strength, small portions of the once vast empire have struggled on, the shadow only of imperial dignity. But the glory had departed from the house of Æthiop, her power had been prostrated before the mighty conqueror, and his wild band; and the Galla hordes, pouring into the richest provinces, from southern central Africa, re-erected heathen shrines during the reign of anarchy, and rose and flourished on her ruins.

The history of these African Tartars is, however, veiled in the deepest obscurity. Under the title of Oroma, they trace their origin to three sisters,

daughters of Jerusalem, to whom are applied traditions similar to the Scriptural chronicle of the descendants of Lot. In their own language, the word "Galla" signifies *ingressi*; and of themselves they affirm that Wolláboo, their father, came from beyond Bargámo, "the great water;" and that his children were nine—Aroosi, Karaiyo, Jillé, Abitchu, Ghelán, Wóberi, Metta, Gumbitchu, and Betcho-Fugook—from whose loins have sprung the innumerable clans or houses which now people the greater portion of intra-tropical Africa. But by the Moslem bigots, who form the chief curse of Æthiopia, it is said that the term by which the nation is recognized was applied to the Ilma Oroma, or seed of Oroma, by the Prophet himself, who, on sending to summon Wolláboo to become a proselyte to the true faith, received a direct refusal. "Gal La," "he said No," reported the unsuccessful messenger on his return. "Let this then be the denomination of the infidels in future," exclaimed the arch impostor, "since they will not receive the celestial revelations made to me through the angel Gabriel."

But whatever may be the origin of the heathen invaders, it is certain that, as a martial people, they have greatly degenerated from their ancestors. Under one head, they overran the fairest provinces of Æthiopia; and had they remained united, they might, with equal ease, have completed the conquest of the greater portion of the African continent. Relaxing,

however, in their common cause against the Christians, the tribes soon began to contest among each other for the possession of the newly-acquired territory. Intestine feuds and dissensions neutralized their giant power; and the weakness and disorganization by which the majority are now characterized is to be ascribed to the fact of there being no paramount chief.

Roving in his native pastures, where his manners are unadulterated by the semi-civilization of Abyssinia, the equestrian Galla is an object worthy the pencil of Carle Vernet or Pinelli. Tall and athletic, his manly figure is enveloped in a toga, such as graced the sons of ancient Rome, and his savage, wild, and fiery features, are rendered still more ferocious by thick bushy hair arranged either in large lotus-leaved compartments, or streaming over the shoulders in long raven plaits. But grease and filth form his delight; and he sparkles under a liberal coat of the much-loved butter, which is unsparingly applied when proceeding to the perpetration of the most dastardly and inhuman deeds. Accoutred with spear, sword, and buckler, and wedded to the rude saddle, whereof he would seem to form a part, the Pagan scours fearlessly over the grassy savannas which he has usurped from the Christian, and is engaged in perpetual desultory strife with all his border neighbours.

Possessing the finest breed of horses in Æthiopia, and wealthy both in flocks and herds, which roam

over boundless meadows, smiling with clover, trefoil, and buttercups, this pastoral people devote their time equally to agricultural pursuits, and herein they are aided by a delightful climate, and by a luxuriant, well-watered soil. Whilst the women tend the sheep and oxen in the field, and manage the hives of bees, the men plough, sow, and reap, presenting in this respect a striking contrast to their indolent lowland neighbours, the Adaïel, whom they rival in barbarous ferocity, in treachery, and in savage propensities. Rich and verdant valleys, the glory of the mountains, and the pride of the proprietors, flourish with the most luxuriant crops, which are but too frequently swept from off the land by the sudden burst of war. Often is the cup of hope dashed from the lips when the enjoyment of the contents is deemed most certain; and the mangled corse of the husbandman is left on the borders of the very field of which he was garnering in the ripe corn.

Nor are the female portion of the Galla population less eminent in the equestrian art than their warlike lords, whose steeds it is their business to tend and saddle for the foray. Distinguished for their beauty among the dark daughters of Africa, their fine figures are slenderly attired in a short leathern petticoat, embroidered with a flounce of white cowry shells, and clasped around the waist by a zone of coloured beads. A flowing cotton robe completes the toilet of the wealthy; and the

time of all is equally devoted to the braiding an infinity of minute tresses, which fall over the shoulders after the manner of the ancient Egyptians. But their garments and their persons are unsparingly anointed with lard and butter; and the romance that might otherwise attach to their native charms cannot fail to be dispelled on near approach.

The conically thatched cabins of the Galla are grouped in rural clusters, and uniformly surrounded by a stone wall as a precaution against surprise. The hamlet is often concealed by a dark forest of juniper overhanging the deep ravine, whose ever foaming torrent fertilizes the adjacent pastures. Bees form a portion of the wealth of every family, and the flower-clothed meads, fostered by an Italian sky, are covered with them. The same whimsical customs which have been generally practised since the days of Virgil are here extant. The same confused clamour is raised to induce the swarm to alight; and the cylindrical hive having been rubbed inside with the leaves of odoriferous herbs to entice the wild insects to remain, it is suspended under the eaves of the hut, and twice during the year robbed of the honey.

To the performance of the religious rites of the Pagan, a tree is indispensable, his devotions and his sacrifices being invariably performed under the shadow of its boughs. On the interment of a priest, a sycamore, or a coffee tree, is planted over

the grave, and held sacred for ever; whilst on the banks of the Háwash stands the venerable Woda Nuwee[1], to which the tribes flock from far and wide to make vows and propitiatory offerings, and to recount their exploits in war. Paying adoration only to stocks and stones, and bending the knee to none but idols and serpents, they here make oblations of butter and honey to secure the favour of the deity—hang upon the spreading branches the trophies taken from their enemies; and performing incantations to *Sár*, the prince of the demons, bind around their necks the entrails of the slaughtered victim which has yielded auspicious omens.

Two great annual sacrifices are made to the deities Ogli and Atéti, the former between June and July, the latter in the beginning of September. A number of goats having been slain, the Lúbah, or priest, wearing a tuft of long hair on his crown, proceeds with a bell in his hand, and his brows encircled by a fillet of copper, to divine from the fat, caul, and entrails, whether or not success will attend the warriors in battle. This point determined, the assembled multitude, howling and screaming like demons, continue to surfeit themselves with raw meat, to swallow beer, and to inhale smoke to intoxication until midnight—invoking *Wák*, the Supreme Being, to grant numerous progeny, lengthened years, and abundant

[1] *Ficus sycamorus*, the wild fig. It is called *worka*, "the golden," by the Amhára, and attains a vast size.

crops, as well as to cause their spears to prevail over those of their foes; and when sacrificing to Atéti, the goddess of fecundity, exclaiming frequently, "Lady, we commit ourselves unto thee; stay thou with us always."

The Kalicha is the Galla wizard, conjurer, and physician. With the putrefying intestines of a goat hung about his neck, and armed with a bell and a copper whip, his skill in the expulsion of the devil is rarely known to fail. Adoration having been paid to a serpent, the patient is rubbed with butter, fumigated with potent herbs, and exorcised with frantic howls, a few strokes of the lash being administered until the cure is perfected. No Amhára will slay either a Lúbah or a Kalicha under any circumstances, from a superstitious dread of his dying curse; and Galla sorceresses are frequently called in by the Christians of Shoa, to transfer sickness, or to rid the house of evil spirits, by cabalistic incantations, performed with the blood of ginger-coloured hens, and red he-goats.

But among the Galla sorcerers and soothsayers, the Wáto, already mentioned as inhabiting the mountain Dalácha, towards the sources of the Háwash, are the most universally celebrated. Neither Pagan nor Christian will molest this tribe, from the same superstitious apprehension of their malediction, and still more from a desire to obtain their blessing; whilst he who receives the protection of a Wáto may travel with perfect security over

every part of the country inhabited by the Galla. Subsisting entirely by the chase, they wander from lake to lake and from river to river, destroying the hippopotamus, upon the flesh of which animal they chiefly live—whereas no other heathen will touch it. Feared and respected, and claiming to themselves to be the original stock of the Oromo nation, they deem all other clans unclean from having mixed with Mohammadans and Christians; and refusing on this account to intermarry, remain to this day a separate and distinct people.

All barbarians are orators; and the euphonical language of the Galla, which unfortunately can boast of no written character, is admirably adapted to embellish their eloquent and impressive delivery. Cradled in the unexplored heights of Æthiopia, many of the customs of these fierce illiterate idolaters are closely and remarkably allied to those of the more civilized nations of antiquity. Seeking presages, like the Romans and Etrurians, in the flight of birds, and in the entrails of slaughtered sacrifices; wearing the hair braided like the ancient Egyptians, and, like them, sleeping with the head supported by a wooden crutch—wedding the relict of a deceased brother, according to the Mosaic law, and bowing the knee to the old serpent, whom they regard as the father of all mankind—an acquaintance with these wild invaders suggests curious speculations on their origin, when referred to a common parent; and these are rendered still more interest-

ing by the existence of a prophecy, that their hordes are one day to quit the highlands of their usurpation, and march to the east and to the north, "that they may conquer the inheritance of their Jewish ancestors."

CHAPTER VIII.

UNEXPLORED COUNTRIES TO THE SOUTH.

Divided into endless houses, the majority of the independent Oromo tribes, to the south of Shoa, are governed by hereditary chieftains; and it is only where the Moslem slave-dealer has successfully commenced the work of conversion to the creed promulgated by the Prophet, that this wild heathen race have been brought to bow the neck to the yoke of kings. Of this Enárea affords a most striking example, for there one-half of the entire population have abandoned idolatry, whilst despotism has taken root, and flourishes under a line of Mohammadan rulers.

Surrounded on all sides by lofty mountains, this kingdom embraces an extensive table land, which separates the waters to the north and south, and ranks among the most elevated regions of Africa. Menchilla, stretching from east to north-west, is the principal range, and a spur to the south-west is described as joining the so called Mountains of the Moon. Sáka, the capital, contains from ten to twelve thousand inhabitants, mixed Pagans and Mohammadans, who inhabit houses of a circular form,

somewhat better constructed than those of the Amhára.

Sáeed was the son of Ascári, a Mohammadan, and his sister Elikkee wedding a Galla, bore a son, Téso, who was brought up in idolatry, and conquered Enárea. His son Bóko also died a Pagan; but Bófo, "the serpent," who succeeded on the death of his father, was converted to Islamism by Mootár, his uncle, the nephew of Elikkee. Abba Bókibo, the present and fourth monarch, is represented to be just and merciful, but his ancestors were monstrous and relentless tyrants, who "caused rivers of blood to flow, and slew the people like cows." Arrayed in a black mantle of goat's hair, His Majesty dispenses justice in the market-place, sitting on the trunk of a tree with a bullock's hide spread beneath his feet. Sáka contains upwards of one thousand *moolahs*; but in the absence of mosques, prayers are held at the tomb of Bófo, the first convert to the faith. Twice during each year, great military expeditions are undertaken, which rarely extend beyond eight or ten days. Every soldier carries a small supply of bread, and trusts for further subsistence to pillage and plunder. Many bloody battles are annually fought with the surrounding tribes, and wide tracts of country thus annexed to the royal possessions.

The Agállo, Yelloo, Betcho, Sudécha, Chora, and Nono, are all subject to the Suppéra, or king, of Enárea, whose sway extends to the Sóddo, Metta

and Maleema Galla, about the sources of the Háwash, which rises in Adda-Berga. Limmoo, whereof the capital is Sobitcha, is a province annexed of old to Enárea; and Abba Bókibo, desirous of subjugating Gooderoo, and the countries to the north as far as the Nile, sent to propose an alliance with Dedjasmach Góshoo, the ruler of Gojam. "You sell slaves," was the reply of the Christian potentate, "and are a Mohammadan to boot. It cannot be." One hundred horns of civet and fifty female slaves which had been sent by the Suppéra, were nevertheless accepted, and thirty matchlocks, with persons versed in the use of fire-arms, were forwarded in return.

Little sickness of any sort prevails, and mendicants, the pest of Abyssinia, are said to be unknown in the land. The wild vine flourishes, and bears abundance of grapes. The "gosso" tree, which attains a vast height, is covered during the season with delicious berries, and is ascended by means of the tendrils of the vine bound around the stem. Coffee grows wild in every wood, to the height of eight and ten feet, and bends under the load of fruit. A large skin full is purchased for twopence-halfpenny sterling, and the decoction, prepared as in Europe, is invariably presented to the stranger, as is an infusion of the "chaat," a coarse species of the tea-plant, which there flourishes spontaneously, and is cultivated in Shoa.

The civet cat is a native of Enárea, and being caught in gins, is kept in the house and fed on meat

and boiled maize. The cages are daily placed before the fire preparatory to the operation of removing the secretion, which is performed with a wooden spoon. A lump about the size of a small filbert is yielded at each baking, and it forms a considerable article of export. Myrrh and frankincense are also produced in great quantities, and are employed in religious ceremonies, burnt sacrifices of incense being made to the guardian genius.

Notwithstanding the conversion to Mohammadanism of so large a portion of the population, sacrifices are still made to "Wák" on the festival of Hedár Michael, which, together with the Sabbath, is strictly observed by all the Galla tribes. The Woda tree is at Betcho; no woman is suffered to come near it; and under its sacred shade all priests are ordained—even the followers of the Prophet placing blood upon it as a superstitious oblation. Thousands upon thousands of the heathen having assembled, the Lúbah sprinkles over the crowd, first beer, then an amalgamation of unroasted coffee and butter, and lastly, flour and butter mixed in a separate mess. A white bull is then slaughtered, and its blood scattered abroad to complete the ceremonies, which are followed by eating, drinking, and drunkenness.

Zingero, which is visible from the high land of Enárea, was, until within the last two years, at constant war with the Galla states. Jimma and Limmoo uniting, then overran the country; and

having dethroned Amno Zérmud, the occupant of the throne, annexed the ancient kingdom to the dominions of Abba Bókibo. It is bounded on the south by a great river called the Gochob. Anger, the capital, is situated on the summit of a very high mountain; and the whole country, which sinks to a much lower level, is rich and fertile.

In days of yore, fourteen kingdoms are said to have been tributary to the sovereign of Zingero. The succession to the throne was determined from amongst the nobles, who, at the demise of the monarch, were wont to assemble in an open field, when he over whose head a bee or a vulture first chanced to fly was elected by the unanimous voice of the people. Although no portion of the population professes the Christianity of Æthiopia, and none of its fasts are observed, the rite of circumcision is universal, and the Sabbath is respected, together with the Abyssinian festivals of Kidána Meherát and St. Michael.

Prior to the conquest of Zingero, no male slave was ever sold,—a practice which is said to have originated in the conduct of one of the daughters of the land. A certain king of old commanded a man of rank to slaughter his wife, her flesh having been prescribed by the sorcerers as the only cure for a malady wherewith His Majesty was grievously afflicted. Returning to his house for the purpose of executing the royal mandate, the noble found his fair partner sleeping, and her beauty so disarmed

him, that his hand refused to perpetrate the murderous deed. Hereat the despot waxing wroth, directed the lady to slay her husband, which she did without any remorse or hesitation, and thus brought odium upon the whole sex, who have since been considered fit only to become slaves and drudges.

Immediately upon the birth of a male child the mammæ are amputated, from a belief that no warrior can possibly be brave who possesses them, and that they should belong only to women. This fact is fully corroborated in the persons of the few prisoners of war who reach the kingdom of Shoa. Since the overthrow of the ancient dynasty, the country has been ravaged for slaves by all the surrounding states, but few will deign to survive the loss of liberty; and suicide is so frequent in captivity, that the males are hardly considered worth the trouble of exporting.

Human sacrifices have ever been, and still are, frightfully common in Zingero. When carrying off slaves from that country, the merchant invariably throws the handsomest female captive into lake Umo, in form of a tribute or propitiatory offering to the genius of the water. It is the duty of a large portion of the population to bring their first-born as a sacrifice to the deity, a custom which tradition assigns to the advice of the sorcerers. In days of yore it is said that the seasons became jumbled. There was neither summer nor winter, and the fruits of the earth came not to maturity. Having assembled

the magicians, the king commanded them to show how this state of things might best be rectified, and the rebellious seasons be reduced to order. The wise men counselled the cutting down of a certain great pillar of iron which stood before the gate of the capital, and the stock whereof remains to the present time. This had the effect desired; but in order to prevent a relapse into the former chaos of confusion, the Magi directed that the pillar, as well as the footstool of the throne, might be annually bathed in human blood; in obedience to which a tribute was levied upon the first-born, who are immolated upon the spot.

Of the independent Galla tribes lying immediately contiguous to Enárea, Góma, under Abba Rébo, is the principal. This king is also a convert to Mohammadanism; and the life of his father having been saved by a vulture, which, according to the legend, plucked out the eyes of a host of Gentiles by whom the royal person was assailed, he retains a domesticated bird, which, with a tinkling bell around its neck, invariably accompanies the army on all predatory expeditions. At the termination of the first march, Abba Rébo, with his own royal hands, slays a white bull, and if the wild vultures of the air join the trained bird in the repast, the omens are esteemed to be fortunate.

The Mohammadan Galla tribes, those on the border especially, are uniformly the most savage and barbarous. The Alaba are dire monsters, and

more dreaded than the wild beasts, whom they far exceed in ferocity. The cruelties practised by the chief of the Góma are almost incredible. Offenders are deprived of hands, nose, and ears; and their eyes having been seared with a hot iron, the mutilated victims are paraded through the market-place for the edification of the populace. The sight of all prisoners taken in war is similarly destroyed; and a stone having been tied about the neck, they are thrown by hundreds into a river formerly styled Daamis, but now denominated the Chuba, from a belief that its waters are composed solely of human blood." It rises in Utter Gudder, where is a tributary tribe called Mergo, subsisting entirely upon the chase of the elephant and wild buffalo. In Góma the Moslem faith is universal. Every man is a warrior; and retaining a number of Shankela slaves to cultivate the ground, remains idle himself, unless when engaged in war or in the chase.

The Booro are a republican tribe of Pagans, bordering on Enárea, and who, acknowledging no king, are governed by a council of the elders. Inhabiting lofty mountains to which there is only one accessible road, strongly fortified by nature as well as art, none venture to invade this commonwealth, whilst the Boono make war with impunity upon all the surrounding clans; and, from their signal prowess in the field, are said to be propitiated even by the King of Enárea.

Jimma and Mancho are independent Galla tribes

under Saana, surnamed Abba Juffár, from the title of his war-horse, which in Æthiopia is usually assumed by the chieftain. From Sáka, a southerly course through these provinces leads, by fifteen or twenty easy stages, directly to the Gochob, above the cataracts of Dumbáro, the neighbourhood of which is infested by banditti, who lie in ambush to kidnap the unwary. The river is crossed by means of rafts belonging to the Queen of Cáffa. They are capable each of containing from thirty to forty persons, and are formed of the trunks of large trees lashed together with strips of raw hide, and surrounded by high gunwales of the same construction —the helm being a moveable spar, unaided by oars or other propelling power.

Cáffa is the mountainous peninsula formed by the junction of the Omo with the Gochob. It is an independent country of mixed Pagans and Christians, over whom presides Bálee, the relict of King Hulláloo. She is represented to be a young woman of extraordinary energy and ability, very hospitable to the rovers who visit her with blue calico, beads, and trinkets, in return for which she gives cloth and other produce of the country. On the demise of her husband she assembled all the governors of the different provinces, and having caused them to be put in irons, proclaimed herself queen. Her only son Gomárra, "the hippopotamus," still a youth, leads the army into the field; but she often proceeds with the troops in person, and invariably

plans the expedition. Whensoever she moves abroad, her subjects are bound to spread the way with their raiment; and as well during the administration of justice from behind a screen with a small aperture, as during the public banquet, drums, fiddles, and flutes play incessantly.

Nyhur, Moyey, Ziggahán, Boora, and Alera, are the principal towns of Cáffa; and the entire rugged and mountainous country is covered with thick forests, which also clothe the banks of the Gochob, affording shelter to the elephant, the buffalo, the rhinoceros, and other wild beasts, in extraordinary numbers. The river is said to take its source in the distant provinces of Bédee Yédee and Góma, and below the cataracts abounds in hippopotami, which are much hunted by the natives. Dumbáro, Wurretta, and Tufftee, as also the Golda negroes, who go perfectly naked, are tributary to Bálee, and pay chiefly in gold obtained from the hot valleys. The inhabitants of Cáffa reverence Friday and Sunday, as do the Galla, and like them celebrate the festival of St. Michael by a great feast; but their language, which is common to Gobo, Tufftee, and Dumbáro, is quite distinct from that spoken by the Galla nation.

A considerable trade exists with Enárea in slaves and cotton cloths, which latter are to be purchased for a piece of salt value twopence-halfpenny sterling. Coffee is produced in immense quantities, of the finest quality, and tradition points to this country

as the first residence of the plant. It was spread by the civet cat over the mountains of the Ittoo and Aroosi Galla, where it has flourished for ages in wild profusion, and is thence said to have been transported five hundred years ago by an enterprising trader from the opposite coast of Arabia.

Beyond the extensive wilderness which bounds Cáffa on the south, are the Doko, an exceedingly wild race, not much exceeding four feet in height, of a dark olive complexion, and in habits even more closely approximated to "the beasts that perish" than the bushmen of Southern Africa. They have neither idols, nor temples, nor sacred trees; but possess a glimmering idea of a Supreme Being, to whom in misfortune—such as any of their relatives being slain by the kidnapper—they pray with their feet resting against a tree: "*Yere*, if indeed thou art, why dost thou suffer us to be killed? We are only eating ants, and ask neither food nor raiment. Thou hast raised us up. Why dost thou cast us down?"

Many natives of Cáffa and Enárea, who for evil purposes have visited the country inhabited by this people, describe the road to it from the former kingdom to pass through forests and mountains, for the most part without population, and swarming with wild beasts, the elephant and buffalo especially. From Bonga, distant about fifty or sixty miles, it is ten days' journey to Tufftee, the Omo river being crossed midway by a rude wooden bridge, sixty yards

in length. Seven easy stages beyond Tufftee is Kooloo, whence the Doko may be reached in one day. Their climate is warm and the seasons extremely wet, the rains commencing in May, and continuing with occasional intermission until February.

The wilderness is principally clothed with a dense forest of bamboo, in the depths of which the natives construct their rude wigwams of bent canes and grass. They have no king, no laws, no arts, no arms; possess neither flocks nor herds; are not hunters, do not cultivate the soil, but subsist entirely upon fruits, roots, mice, reptiles, ants, and honey. They beguile serpents by whistling in a certain note, and having torn them piecemeal with their long nails, devour them raw; but although the forests abound to such an extent with elephants, buffaloes, lions, and leopards, they have no means of destroying or entrapping them. A large tree called Loko is found, amongst many other species, attaining an extraordinary height, the roots of which, when scraped, are red, and serve for food. The *yebo* and *meytee* are the principal fruits; and to obtain these, women as well as men ascend the trees in numbers, and in their quarrels and scrambles not unfrequently throw each other down from the branches.

Both sexes go perfectly naked, and have thick pouting lips, diminutive eyes, and flat noses. The hair is not woolly, and in the females reaches to the

shoulders. The men have no beard. The nails, never pared, grow both on the hands and feet like eagles' talons, and are employed in digging for ants. The Doko are ignorant of the use of fire. They perforate the ears in infancy with a pointed bamboo, so as to leave nothing save the external cartilage, but they neither tattoo nor pierce the nose; and the only ornament worn is a necklace composed of the spinal bones of a serpent.

Great annual slave hunts are undertaken from Dumbáro, Cáffa, and Kooloo; and the dense forests of bamboo, the creaking of which is represented to be loud and incessant, often prove the scene of fierce and bloody struggles between rival tribes. Wide tracts having been encircled, the band of rovers, converging, impel the denizens to the centre. Holding a gay cloth before their persons, they dance and sing in a peculiar manner; and the defenceless negroes, aware from sad experience that all who attempt to escape will be ruthlessly hunted down, and perhaps slain, tamely approach, and suffer themselves to be blindfolded. One hundred merchants can thus kidnap a thousand Doko; and although long prone to their old habits of digging for ants, and searching for mice, serpents, or lizards, the captives rarely attempt to escape. Their docility and usefulness, added to very limited wants, rendering them in high demand, none are ever sold out of the countries bordering on the Gochob, and none therefore find their way to Shoa.

Nothing that is related of these people, whether as respects stature or habits, would seem to be preposterous or unworthy of credit, the descriptions given of them differing in no very material points from what is known of the Bushmen of Southern Africa, amongst whom I have travelled. Agreeing in every respect with the type of Herodotus, they are unquestionably the pygmies of the ancients, who describe them as found in tropical Africa; and it is a fact, well worthy of observation, that the natives of Caffa represent their forefather *Boogázee* to have issued from a cave in a forest—a tradition which cannot fail to call to mind the Troglodytes, who are also mentioned by the father of history as being inhabitants of this portion of the African continent.

It would be beside my purpose to collect and introduce here all that the ancients and moderns have written to render probable the existence of a diminutive race of men; but it may be worth observing, in addition to what has been adduced above, that Aristotle, in his History of Animals [1], professes his belief in the existence of such a race, which he supposes to have inhabited the marshes about the sources of the Nile, and to have dwelt, like the Troglodytes, in caverns. It would appear from this, that some report of the Doko had reached Greece. The great naturalist does not fix the stature of the small men of whom he speaks, though he adopts

[1] Lib. viii. c. 12.

the popular name of Pygmies, because he is led to speak of them while noticing the Homeric fable respecting their battles with the Cranes. Homer[1], however, himself, places them near the ocean, where, according to the accounts I received, they are really found. Strabo[2], who had already imbibed something of the spirit of modern philosophy, thought it better to sneer than to inquire, and rejected the whole story; though he did not hesitate to believe, contrary to experience, that all the animals of Upper Egypt were of diminutive size. Pliny[3], whose faith was of boundless expansion, could discover no absurdity in the supposition, that there existed a race of men twenty-seven inches high, probably because he may have seen individual dwarfs who were no larger. He makes, however, one remark which may be worth notice,—namely, that the small race had scarcely any nose at all, but instead, two spiracles above the mouth, which served them in lieu of nostrils.

But laying aside all these legends, I can discover no absurdity in what is related concerning the stature of the Doko. They are, it is said, about four feet high, in which they resemble the Laplanders, the Samoyedes, and, as I have already observed, the Bushmen. The Naturalist, Commerson[4], had heard of a similar people, called Quimos, in the opposite island of

[1] Iliad. iii. 3, sqq. [2] Geograph. xvii. 2.
[3] Nat. Hist. vi. 35.
[4] Camus, Notes sur l'Histoire des Animaux d'Aristot. p. 485.

Madagascar, though Rochon, and other modern travellers, say they could obtain no information respecting them. Some naturalists, in this as in most other cases, easily elude the difficulty by a bold profession of incredulity[1]. It would, perhaps, be more philosophical to investigate and inquire. Great differences we know exist in the stature of different nations, and it has possibly not been yet ascertained what is the smallest or the largest size to which the human body can attain. That no specimens of the Doko race should reach Shoa is remarkable, and may be deemed suspicious; but the reasons given are not altogether destitute of plausibility; and, at all events, the rumours in circulation throughout that part of Africa deserve to be reported, in order that, as discovery advances, they who are destined to achieve it may be prompted to careful examination.

[1] Virey, Histoire Naturelle du Genre Humain, t. ii. p. 240, et suiv.

CHAPTER. IX.

THE RIVER GOCHOB.

An inspection of the map will show on the eastern coast an extensive hiatus, which, from the scanty reports that have been gleaned, is most certainly studded with high mountains, and drained by numerous and powerful rivers; but no details have hitherto been obtained that justified the laying down of either with any geographical accuracy. The first accounts of the existence in central Africa of a great river were brought to Etearchus, king of the Oasis of Ammon, by certain youths of the Nassamonians, who, as related by Herodotus, "had been deputed to explore her solitudes. After a journey of many days they were seized and carried into captivity by some men of dwarfish stature, who conducted them over marshy grounds, to a city in which all the inhabitants were of the same diminutive appearance, and of a black colour. This city was washed by a great river, now ascertained to be the Niger, which flowed from west to east, and abounded in crocodiles."

The early Arabian geographers specifically men-

tion large rivers descending from the high mountain land to the southward of the blue Nile, and flowing to the Indian ocean; and it is a curious fact, that they designate one of these "the River of Pygmies." The Portuguese were the next who spoke of this stream, upwards of two centuries ago; and from the highlands of Abyssinia a clue to its origin and course has now been obtained, which will serve in a great measure to supply the existing deficiencies, and to cover the wide space of *terra incognita* in Eastern Africa north of the equator.

The Gochob is described to rise in the great central ridge which is now known to divide the waters that discharge themselves east into the Indian Ocean, from those that flow west into the Bahr el Abiad, and more southerly into the Atlantic. Spreading into a lake, and bearing on its bosom a noble body of water, it is joined, fifteen days' journey south of Enárea, by the Omo, a large tributary which rises beyond Tufftee in Susa Maketch, in a jet of water playing the height of a spear shaft. Half a day's journey below the point of junction, the united volume rolls over a stupendous cataract called Dumbáro, the roar of which can be heard many miles, whence pursuing its course to the south-east, it forms the southern limit of Zingero, and finally disembogues into the sea.*

There seems every reason to believe that the Gochob must be identical with the Kibbee of the best extant maps, described to be a very large river

coming from the north-west, and entering the sea near the town of Juba, immediately under the equator. If not the Kibbee, it must be the Quilimancy, which disembogues by several estuaries between Patta and Malinda, four degrees further to the south; but all accounts of the latter that have yet been collected from the coast, authorize the adoption of the first hypothesis.

The general course of the Nile to the north, and of the Kibbee to the south, are said to have been well known to the Egyptians three thousand years ago. The sacristan of the temple of Minerva in Thebes told Herodotus that half the waters of the father of rivers flowed to the north, and the other half to the south, and that they were produced by the tropical rains. The currents experienced in five degrees north of the equator, in the vicinity of the coast, confirm the opinion of a great river rolling a vast body of water into the eastern ocean. At their height during the prevalence of the monsoon in August and September, they are known to sweep a vessel along at the rate of one hundred and twenty miles a day, frequently exposing the inexperienced navigator to the chance of shipwreck on Socotra, whereas before and after the tropical rains the current is scarcely perceptible. Were this caused by the monsoon, it would prevail equally over these latitudes during the influence of the south-westerly winds; but the fact remains, that it is felt only off the coast in about five degrees north latitude, at the

period alone when the river must be swollen with the volume of water gathered from the highest mountain land in the interior.

Beyond Zingero, and considerably lower down the great river, is the kingdom of Koocha, which is described to be hot, and subject to annual rains of two months' duration. It extends on both sides, with a numerous population inhabiting many large towns, of which Laadé, Seylo, Umpho, Jella, Gulta, Aara, and Wunjo, all on the northern bank, are the principal. The houses are conical, and constructed of mud and bamboos, which there grow abundantly. All the nation are Galla, with features strictly those of the Negro, and their king is Bosha, the son of Laadé, surnamed, from the title of his war steed, Abba Wábotoo, "I am he who seizes."

In addition to the two umbrellas of state, the one composed of blue, and the other of crimson, this chieftain is distinguished by a shield covered with massive gold, and by many ornaments of the same precious metal on his person. The costume of all classes consists of party-coloured raiment—red, blue, and white, being mingled together in profusion. Large pewter ear-rings are worn by the males; and by the females, whose hair is braided in long ringlets, silver armlets, anklets, and bracelets. Both sexes are great equestrians. The saddles are covered with red imported leather, and the horses and mules are large and abundant. Cultivation in every description of tropical grain is universal;

honey abounds in every quarter, and beer and hydromel are manufactured by all.

Spices, odoriferous woods, and aromatic herbs, tea, coffee, oranges, nutmeg, and ginger, are exceedingly plentiful. Precious stones are also found, and bartered to certain white men, who, wearing shoes, trousers, and hats, and having yellow hair, come with their merchandize in rowing-boats thirty days from the sea. They bring blue calico, chintz, pepper, tobacco, copper, cutlery, and "fire water," and receive in exchange slaves, ivory, spices, and gold, which latter is brought in large quantities from Douro.

Slaves being in great demand, and their acquisition extremely lucrative, Bosha is at perpetual war with all the surrounding tribes, save during the annual rains. The Dánnagem, and the Danna-Oorkeshool Galla, are attacked every year, as are also the Málee Galla, a people armed with bows and arrows, who dig pits, throw up bamboo stockades, and place pointed stakes in the ground to annoy the cavalry of Koocha, whose horses being kept in the house all the year round, and abundantly fed, are very superior. Murderers are punished according as they have dealt with their victim—one or two or more spear wounds or blows with the sword being inflicted by the nearest relative of the deceased—but all thieves, delinquents, and poor people, are sold to the white traders, and immense numbers of slaves of both sexes are brought down

by the Douro Galla, in rafts with high gunwales, containing six or eight persons.

The great river, which in this kingdom is supplied by two large tributaries—the Toreech, rising in the country of the Gama Gobo, and the Teeto, coming from the Alla Galla—is the medium of all trade. It is very broad, and, except during the rainy season, has little perceptible motion. The volume of water is always large, and comes from a great distance inland. Hippopotami and elephants abound; and the *gimjah*, or tree tiger, which infests the borders, is greatly feared for its ferocity, and prized for the beauty of its skin. Native crafts reach the sea in fifteen days, and ivory, slaves, coffee, and a variety of other merchandize, are constantly brought on rafts by the tribes higher up; but the white people never go beyond Koocha, neither do the interior tribes pass down to the sea.

The Gochob, of which the discovery promises important accessions in a geographical as well as in a commercial point of view, may be conjectured to be the "Bargámo," or great water, from beyond which the Galla describe their hordes to have poured, when they invaded Abyssinia, after being driven from the vast unexplored interior by the centrifugal force yet unexplained. Like the barbarous nations who were made the weapons of Divine chastisement upon the corrupted empire of Rome, they also brought darkness and ignorance in their train, but were unable to eradicate the true religion.

Throughout the regions included between the Nile, the Háwash, and the Gochob, which may properly be termed Galla, none but their own tongue is spoken; whereas to the south of the last-named river, the intruding population have lost their language and become gradually incorporated with the aboriginal possessors of the soil. Whatever may be the true magnitude of the river, it is clearly navigated to a considerable extent by a white people, who reap a lucrative harvest whilst draining the country of its population, by a traffic which must reflect the blackest disgrace upon the name of any civilized people, and is here not rendered the less infamous by the fact, that many of their purchases are Christians.

CHAPTER X.

EXISTING CHRISTIAN REMNANTS.

On both sides of the river Gochob, there exist in various quarters isolated communities professing the Christianity of Æthiopia, who, for a long period of years, have successfully held their position among the mountain fastnesses in the very heart of the now Pagan and Mohammadan country. One of the most remarkable of these seats is in the lake Zooai, called *Láki* in the Galla language, and in that of Gurágué, *Chilláloo*. Here, in the church of Emanuel, are deposited the holy arks, umbrellas, drums, gold and silver chairs, and other furniture belonging to all the sacred edifices of southern Abyssinia; which, with numerous manuscripts no longer extant, were here deposited by Nebla Dengel, at the period of Graan's invasion.

Five rivers empty themselves into this lake. It is described to be a noble sheet of water, teeming with hippopotami, which frequently destroy the frail bamboo rafts employed in maintaining communication betwixt the shore and the Five Islands, Tudduchu, Debra Tehoor, Debra Seena, Goragi, and Amshoot. They are covered with lofty trees,

and contain upwards of three thousand Christian houses, constructed of lime and stone. In religion, the population are said by the clergy of Shoa to have sadly degenerated ; but although destitute of priests, the churches are preserved inviolate, and monks and monasteries abound.

In Guráguê, the population are almost exclusively Christian. Twelve isolated churches, previously unheard of, were discovered a few years since, on the conquest of Yeya by Sáhela Selássie; and between Gárro and Metcha, where forest commences in the south of Shoa, is a small tract peopled by Christians, who reside entirely in caves among the mountains, as a measure of security against the heathen, by whom they are compassed in on every side.

Eight days' journey from Aiméllele on the frontier of Guráguê, is Cambát, a small mountainous province, lying due east of Zingero. With exception of a few Mohammadan rovers, this independent state is inhabited solely by Christians, who have fifteen churches, and numerous monasteries, but, like the people of Zooai, are without priests. The capital, Karempza, is constructed on the summit of a lofty hill of the same name, and Degóyey, the king, who is extremely advanced in years, is represented as a just and upright ruler, very hospitable to strangers, and a great warrior. But between Aiméllele, which is a dependency of Sáhela Selássie, and Cambát, the road passes

through the Adeea and Alaba Galla, the latter governed by a queen whose notorious treachery renders the passage unsafe.

Wollámo is another Christian province under an independent sovereign, lying below Cambát to the south-eastward of Zingero, and at constant war with both these states. The country is extremely mountainous, and the inhabitants, who are purchased for twenty pieces of salt, and frequently brought by the slave dealers to Shoa, are of a fair complexion, and speak a distinct language. Wofána is the capital, and the province is watered by a considerable river termed the Ooma—the surrounding tribes being the Koolloo, Woradda, Assoo, and Jimma. Eight days' journey beyond Zingero is the country of Mager; the king of which is represented to be a very powerful monarch. Korchássie, which is famous for the great river Wábi, flowing to the Indian ocean, is peopled by Christians, as is Sidáma also, and both are surrounded by the heathen.

But of all the isolated remnants of the ancient Æthiopic empire to the south of Abyssinia, Susa would appear to be the most important and the most powerful. This kingdom is situated beyond Cáffa, and extends to the head of the Gitché, which rises in Chára-Nára, and is one of the principal sources of the Gochob. The rains are violent during three months of the year, and the climate is excessively cold, the elevation being much

greater than that of Shoa, whilst beyond are mountains which "seem to touch the skies, and are covered with perpetual snow."

Sugga Surroo was king over Susa. He was a Pagan; but wore a "máteb," as many of the heathen tribes are wont to do. Hoti and Beddoo were his sons; and on his death-bed he bequeathed the sceptre to the former, who, after a reign of ten years marked by the most galling tyranny, was deposed by the people, and Beddoo elevated to the throne. Turning his attention to Christianity, which had greatly degenerated, he revived the custom of bathing the holy cross on Christmas-day, in the river Gitché, where all the surrounding Galla tribes perform the same ceremony without knowing why.

Hoti was exiled in Goma; and having contrived to raise three hundred cavalry, he set out to recover his throne, but was pursued and slain by Abba Rébo. Beddoo is brother to Bálee, the Queen of Cáffa; and it is now six years since he gave his daughter Shásh in marriage to the King of Enárea, through whose country a constant traffic has since been carried on with Northern Abyssinia—numbers of muskets and matchlocks being annually imported, and exchanged for civet, ivory, gold-dust, horses, and slaves.

The road being thus opened, the priests proceeded to Gondar to the patriarch of the Abyssinian church, who breathed the breath of the Holy

Ghost into a leathern bag, which was safely conveyed back to Susa, and hung up in the cathedral. Ecclesiastics in great numbers have been since ordained by the process of opening this bag, and causing a puff to pass across the face. They are distinguished by antique robes and silver mitres, and the churches and religious observances would appear to be similar in every respect to those of Shoa

The King of Susa is described as a tall, fair, and very handsome man of five and thirty, without beard or moustaches, and wearing the hair in the bushy wig-like form of the Amhára. He carries state umbrellas of yellow silk, surmounted by golden globes, wears a sword with a massive golden scabbard, and bears a shield decorated with radii and crosses of the same metal. The government is not despotic. No subject can be put to death unless condemned by the judges. Property is free; and there is no restriction upon dress save in the article of gold, to wear which is the exclusive privilege of royalty.

Bonga is the principal town and capital of Susa; and there the king principally resides, in a stone house of two stories. His queen is Meytee, but he has besides "concubines as numerous as the hairs of the head." The banqueting-hall is a long building similar to those of Sáhela Selássie, and it is the scene of similar revels. His Majesty presides daily at the feast, but is concealed from

the gaze of his carousing subjects by an intervening curtain, whilst the Dedj Agafári, styled "Gubburchu," acts as master of the ceremonies. Public audience is daily given, when the decisions of the judges are confirmed or annulled from a raised throne of solid gold concealed by velvet draperies.

Susa is a kingdom of much greater extent than Shoa, but in manners and customs nearly similar. The monarch is approached with shoulders bared, and three prostrations to the earth. On the festival of *Máskal* an annual review takes place at Boorétta. Oxen are then slain for the soldiery, and each warrior receives a jar of beer from the royal cellars. The herald proclaims the approaching expedition to the sound of the *nagáreet*. The foray resembles that of the Amhára rabble—the same lack of discipline on the march—the same band of flutes and kettledrums—the same female culinary establishment. The warriors are similarly armed, and adopt the green sprig of asparagus in token of deeds of blood; and the only existing difference would appear to be, that the booty captured in war is not monopolized by the crown.

Tribute is paid to Beddoo by the chiefs of many surrounding countries, and principally by the Shankela with tattooed breasts. He annually extends his dominions by murderous inroads, directed chiefly against the Sooroo, a tribe of naked negroes inhabiting the wild valleys of Sása. The Gumroo, a

wild people clothed in hides, and rich in flocks and herds, are also frequently invaded, and hundreds swept into captivity. The chief mountain ranges of Susa are Decha, Gobo, and Saadee; and the principal rivers are the Gitché, Chéso, and Adiyo. Large slave caravans pass through the realm at all seasons from the most remote parts of the interior, the Mohammadan rovers being frequently absent from one to two years.

The costume of the male portion of the population consists of a robe of striped red and blue cotton in alternate bands, with tight trousers and a loose kilt of the same colours and material. The hair is worn *en "goferi,"* as in Shoa, unless after the slaughter of a foe, when it is braided in long tresses like the ancient Egyptians. Copper and ivory bracelets decorate the successful warrior; and a ring of silver is worn in the ear by those who have slain the giant amongst mammalia.

The females are described as being fairer and more comely than their frail sisters of Shoa. They wear red and blue striped trousers, reaching midleg, with a loose shift and a robe, also party-coloured, the former enclosed by a zone of beads. The hair is dressed like that of the Amhára, in the shape of a bee-hive, with minute rows of elaborate curls; but the odour of rancid butter with which these are clotted, is somewhat alleviated by the liberal application of oil of cloves.

" Marriage is celebrated without the intervention of

the priesthood, and polygamy is universally exercised at the discretion of the man according to his worldly substance. The contracting parties simply pledge fidelity, and in event of subsequent separation, the lady carries off her portion. Every house possesses its slaves; but those both of king and subject are permitted to work for themselves one day out of the seven. All occupation is interdicted on the Sabbath, as well as on the festivals of Gabriel, Michael, and Georgis, which are the only saints' days observed in Susa.

The language spoken is quite distinct from that of the Galla, from the Amháric, and from the ancient Geez or Æthiopic. It possesses a written character. The houses are constructed upon a circular plan of wattle and thatch. All classes are warriors, well mounted, and frequently engaged in the chase—large packs of dogs being kept for the purpose of hunting the rhinoceros, buffalo, elephant, lion, leopard, giraffe, zebra, and ostrich, which, with many other animals new to natural history, are said to abound. Bridles are manufactured of the skin of the hippopotamus, with which the rivers teem, and numbers of them are slain by the wandering Wáto.

Raw flesh, eaten with pepper, butter, and wheaten bread, forms the principal diet. Edible fruits are abundant. Citrons, nutmeg, ginger, coffee, and tea, grow wild over the whole country. The two latter are taken by the Christians of Susa, as is also snuff;

but tobacco is not inhaled. The grape vine is indigenous and extensively cultivated; and the Outoo, the Gondweiyo, and the Goddo, are described as aromatic trees, of which the flowers, possessing the richest perfume, are dried, pulverized, and amalgamated with civet—the cats producing which are kept in every house, fed on raw beef, and placed before the fire, as in Enárea.

Amongst the manifold superstitions of the people of Susa, a new knife, before being used for cutting meat, must be blown upon by the priest. Witchcraft has a firm hold upon every mind; and many a luckless worker in iron is with his whole family condemned to be burnt alive in his house, as an atonement for evil deeds. Theft is punished by sewing up the culprit in a green hide, when he is suspended by the heels in the market-place, with the stolen property about his neck, until the contraction of the drying skin at length puts a period to his sufferings—a refinement this upon the cruelty of the Emperor Maximin.

The particulars that I have embodied in this and the two preceding chapters have been gathered from the concurrent testimony of numerous individuals of various tribes, ages, and religions, who have either visited or were natives of the countries referred to, and who, after attaining to manhood, had been borne away in slavery. Together with their own language they retained a perfect recollection of the land of their birth, and of all

that had befallen them since the loss of liberty—a loss by many dated from a very recent period, and which had resulted either from the lawless violence of the freebooter, or from the unrestrained cupidity of mercenary relatives. Making due allowance for superstition and geographical ignorance, the fullest credit may be accorded—minute cross-examinations of individuals who could have held no previous communication with each other having corroborated every point.

Shedding the clearest light over the countries more immediately adjacent to Shoa, the evidence collected becomes less and less distinct as the lands and tribes under consideration verge towards the distant edge of the horizon. It is important to know that the Gochob, in its upper course, is occupied by so powerful a Christian people, whose sovereign exercises over the destinies of the surrounding Gentiles an influence which, if properly directed, could be made to check the rapid spread of Islamism, instead of fostering the traffic in human beings. The extensive wildernesses beyond Susa may be concluded to form the barrier betwixt the unfruitful land of Nigritia and the fair provinces occupying the most elevated regions of Africa. Seneca relates that two centurions, who were sent by Nero Cæsar to explore the head of the Nile, were recommended by the King of Æthiopia to the nearest kings beyond; and that after a long journey

they came "even unto the further countries, to immense morasses, the end of which neither the natives themselves did know, nor any body else may hope to find."

CHAPTER XI.

THE CONVERSION OF ÆTHIOPIA.

In the year 330 after the birth of our Saviour, Meropius, a merchant of Tyre, having undertaken a commercial voyage to India, landed on the coast of Æthiopia, where he was murdered by the barbarians, and his two sons, Frumentius and Edesius, both devout men, being made prisoners, were carried as slaves before the Emperor. The abilities, the information, and the peaceable demeanour of the brothers, soon gained not only their release, but high office in the court; and living in the full confidence of the monarch until his decease, and subsequently under the protection of the queen-mother, they soon secured the good-will of the entire nation. The work of conversion was commenced, and having proceeded with wonderful rapidity and success, a thriving branch was shortly added to the great Eastern church.

Bearing the happy tidings, Frumentius appeared in Alexandria, where he was received with open arms by the patriarch Athanasius. Loaded with honours, and consecrated the first bishop of Æthiopia, a relation was thus happily commenced with Egypt,

which has remained firm and friendly to the present day, and throughout fifteen centuries has bestowed upon a Coptish priest the high office of Patriarch Abura of the Æthiopic church.

On his return to the country of his hopes, Frumentius found that the spark of life had spread rapidly throughout the gloomy darkness of the land. Baptism was instituted, deacons and presbyters appointed, churches erected, and a firm foundation laid whereon to establish the Christian religion in Abyssinia. Frumentius was deservedly honoured with a favoured niche in the annals of her church history, and, under the title of "Salama," formed the subject of high praise to all the sacred poets of Æthiopia

> "Hail him with the voice of joy, sing praises to Salama,
> The door of pity and of mercy and of pleasant grace;
> Salute those blessed hands bearing the pure torch of the Gospel,
> For the splendour of Christ's church has enlightened our darkness."

During the succeeding century, priests and apostles, men of wonderful sanctity, flocked into the empire from all parts of the East, and miracles the most stupendous are related in the legends of those days. Mountains were removed, and the storms of the angry ocean stilled by the mere application of the staff. The adder and the basilisk glided harmless under foot, and rivers stayed their roaring torrent; that the sandal of the holy man should remain

unstained by the flood. Aragáwi raised the dead—the fingers of Likános flamed like tapers of fire—Samuel rode upon his lion; and thus the kingdom of Arwé, the old serpent of Æthiop, was utterly overthrown.

The Abyssinians now became subtle casuists and disputants. Abstruse doctrines were propounded, and speculative theories largely indulged in; and the generation passed away ere the knotty points had been satisfactorily determined, how long Adam remained in Paradise before his fall? and whether in his present state he held dominion over the angels?

In the year 481, the celebrated council of Chalcedon lighted up the torch of misunderstanding regarding the two natures of Christ. The Eastern church split and separated in mortal feud, and the Saracen pounced upon Egypt, rent and wasted by discord and distraction. The Abyssinians, denouncing the council a meeting of fools, concurred in the opinion of the Alexandrian patriarch. The faith of the Monophysite was declared to be the one only true and orthodox, and the banished Dioscórus received all the honours of a martyr.

"The kings of the earth divided the unity of God and man,
Sing praises to the martyr who laughed their religion to scorn.
He was treated with indignity, they plucked out his flowing beard,
Yea, and tore the teeth from his venerable face;
But in heaven a halo of honour shall encircle Dioscórus."

But during the ensuing oppressions and exactions of the Moslem, the successor of St. Mark could barely retain his own existence in Egypt; and Æthiopia, his remote charge, now nearly isolated from the remainder of the world, rested for the next ten centuries a sealed book to European history, preserving her independence from all foreign yoke, and guarding in safety the flame of that faith which she had inherited from her fathers.

The reign of the ascetics succeeded to that of disputation, and men lacerated their bodies, and lived in holes and caves of the earth like wild beasts. Tekla Haïmanót and Eustathius were the great founders of monkery in the land. An angel announced the birth of one, and the other floated over the sea, borne in safety amidst the folds of his leathern garment. Miracles still continued to be occasionally performed. Sanctity was further enhanced by mortification of the flesh, and austerity of life was highly praised and followed by the admiring mob. The original discipline of the anchorite was severe in the extreme. He was to be continually girt around the loins with heavy chains, or to remain for days immersed in the cold mountain stream—to recline upon the bare earth, and to subsist upon a scanty vegetable diet.

Monasteries were at length founded, and fields and revenues set apart for the convenience of their inmates; and although a visiting superior was

appointed to check corruption and punish innovation or transgression, the asperities of the monastic life gradually softened down. The Etchéguê, or grand prior of the monasteries, preferred the comforts of a settled abode to wearisome tours and visitations. Further immunities were granted to all loving a life of ease and spiritual license; and the commonwealth had to deplore the loss of a large portion of her subjects, who neither contributed tax, nor assisted in military service.

Thus converted at an early period of the Christian age, Æthiopia spread her new religion deep into the recesses of heathen Africa. Extending her wide empire on every side, the praise of the Redeemer soon arose from the wildest valleys and the most secluded mountains. From the great river Gochob to the frontiers of Nubia, the crutch and the cowl pervaded the land. Churches were erected in every convenient spot; and the blue badge of nominal Christianity encircled the necks of an ignorant multitude. The usual wars and rebellions arose, and schisms and sects fill up the archives of ten centuries with all the uninteresting precision of more civilized countries. But still the church flourished; the patriarch was regularly received from Alexandria, and a long list of ninety-five Abunas flows quietly through the dull pages of Abyssinian record, from the time of Frumentius the First, until the days of the venerable Simeon, who, whilst gallantly defending the faith of his

fathers, was barbarously murdered by the European partizans of the Italian Jesuit.

The rise of the Mohammadan power in Arabia, and the rapid spread of Islamism, first circumscribed the limits of the empire, and begirt it round with foes. But although the nation was now called upon to repel the fierce assaults both of the heathen and of the fanatic followers of the false prophet, the measure of her oppression was not filled until the cup had been deeply drained of the converting zeal of European priesthood. The usual horrors attendant upon religious war were then painfully undergone, and the blood of her children was unsparingly poured out. Nearest and dearest relatives rallied under opposite standards; and the same cry of destruction rang from either host, "The glory of the true faith."

The zeal of the Jesuit has seldom been displayed in more glowing colours, or in more decided defeat, than in the attempts so perseveringly made to draw within the meshes of his net the remote church of Æthiopia. And although the means employed are to be justly condemned, still that ardour must be the theme of the high praise of all, which impelled old men and young to dare the difficulties and the dangers of a rude uncivilised land, with exposure to the prejudices of a people as bigoted as themselves in the cause of their religion.

But the wily system of establishing rival orders and monasteries of mortification—of snapping

asunder domestic ties, and of collecting together bands of discontented enthusiasts—well served the interests of the Catholic faith; and there were always to be found obedient servants to bear instructions to the farthest corners of the earth;—men who relinquished few comforts or enjoyments on quitting their austere cells, who were prepared at all hazards, and in all manners, to carry into execution the will of their superiors, and who gloried in the alternative of erecting an eternal fabric in honour of their order, or of obtaining the crown of martyrdom.

The custom of ages had, however, struck too deeply into the heart of the Abyssinian. The power of the officiating clergy was paramount in the land. All the passions and the prejudices of the multitude were too firmly enlisted in the cause of ancient belief; and degraded as was the Christianity of the country, its forms and tenets were not more absurd, and not less pertinaciously supported, than those Romish innovations which were so fiercely, though so ineffectually, attempted.

The soft wily speech and the thunder of excommunication were alike disregarded. Treachery and force were both tried and found equally unavailing. Blood flowed for a season like water, and the sound of wailing was heard from the palace to the peasant's hut; but the storm expended itself, and finally passed away; and after the struggle of a century, the discomfited monks relinquished their

attempts upon the church of the Monophysite, without leaving behind one solitary convert to their faith, and bearing along with them the loud maledictions of an exasperated nation.

CHAPTER XII.

THE COURT OF PRESTER JOHN.

During the darkness of the middle ages, the church of Abyssinia had fallen into complete oblivion; but about the commencement of the sixteenth century rumours were whispered abroad of a Christian monarch and a Christian nation established in the centre of Africa; and the happy news was first brought to the court of Portugal that a Christian church still existed, which had for ages successfully resisted, among the lofty mountains of Abyssinia, the fierce attacks of the sanguinary Saracen.

In the year 1499, Pedro Covilham succeeded in reaching Shoa, where he was received with that favour which novelty usually secures; and although the stranger was prevented by the existing ancient laws from leaving the kingdom, the quest had been successfully performed. The first link was re-established of a chain which had been broken for ages; and shortly afterwards the glories of Prester John and his Christian court were fully disclosed, to abate the intense anxiety that reigned in the heart of every inhabitant of the West.

In due process of time an Abyssinian ambassador

made his appearance in Portugal. Unbounded delight was experienced by King Emanuel, and every honour was lavished upon Matthew the merchant of Shoa. All believed that the Abyssinians were devout Catholics, and that a vast empire, estimated at four times its actual extent, was about to fall under the dominion of the Roman church. A mission on a great scale was fitted out —the journey was safely accomplished—and excited fancy rioted for a time in the description of palaces and fountains which never existed, and pomp, riches, and regal power, utterly unknown in the land.

Missions continued from either court during the succeeding forty years. An alliance was formed. Men learned in the arts and sciences were despatched to settle in Abyssinia. Zaga Zaba arrived in Lisbon, invested with full powers to satisfy the interests of both countries, 'temporal as well as spiritual. But the difference of faith was now for the first time understood. The bitter enmity of the Roman creed stood prominently to view; and the envoy, after studying the details of the Catholic doctrine, and refusing to subscribe a similar contract on behalf of his church, was unscrupulously put to a violent death in a Portuguese prison.

The first flattering ideas regarding the religion of the country being thus found erroneous, the delusion respecting the extent and power of the mighty empire was next to fall to the ground. The Galla were now streaming in hordes from the inte-

rior, and Graan, the Mohammadan invader, was carrying fire and sword throughout the country. The dying Coptish patriarch of Abyssinia was prevailed upon to nominate as his successor John Bermudez, a resident Portuguese; and, hurried by the king, this priest proceeded, without loss of time, to seek military assistance from the courts of Rome and Lisbon.

Schemes of ambition flitted over the minds of the first conquerors of India, and an alliance with Æthiopia seemed highly desirable as a handle for further acquisition in the East. But dilatory measures delayed the arrival of the Portuguese fleet until the suing monarch had been gathered to his fathers; and it has already been seen that Christopher, the son of the famous Vasco de Gama, anchored in the harbour of Massowah at a time when the new Emperor Claudius was sorely pressed to sustain himself upon the throne of his ancestors. The opportunity was not neglected by the archbishop to reduce the heretic Church to the fold of the Roman see; and a series of attempts were commenced, equally to be deplored from the mischief which they created, and the unworthy means that were employed during the struggle.

The signal service rendered by the Portuguese troops in the ensuing wars, the total rout of the Galla and the Moslem, with the slaughter of their invading leader in battle, placed Bermudez in a position to demand high terms from the reinstated

monarch. The conversion of the emperor to the Roman Catholic faith and the possession of one-third of the kingdom, were imperiously proposed, and scornfully rejected. Excommunication was threatened by the proud prelate of the West, and utterly disregarded by King Claudius, who retorted that the pope himself was a heretic. Open hostilities broke out; and although the superior discipline of the Europeans for a time gave them the advantage, they were at length separated by a wily stratagem, and hurried to different quarters of the kingdom; and Bermudez being then seized, was conveyed in honourable exile to the rugged mountains of Efát.

Although much blood and considerable treasure had been thus fruitlessly expended, the conversion of Æthiopia was far from being forgotten in Europe; and the spark of hope was further kept alive by an Abyssinian priest, who asserted, on his arrival in Rome, that the failure of Bermudez had entirely arisen from his own absurd and brutal conduct, and that the utmost deference would be paid to men of sense and capacity. Ignatius Loyola volunteered to repair in person to re-unite the Æthiopic and Roman Catholic churches; but his talents being required for more important objects, the pope refused the desired permission to the great founder of the society of Jesus, and thirteen missionaries from the new order were chosen instead. Nunez Baretto was elevated to the dignity of patriarch,

and André Oviedo appointed provisional successor.

At that period the navigation of the Red Sea was rendered dangerous by numerous Saracen fleets; and the patriarch, deeming it inexpedient to hazard his own valuable person in the perils of the voyage, reposed quietly at Goâ, whilst a deputation headed by Gonsalvez Rodrigues, a priest of secondary rank, was despatched in advance, to ascertain the capabilities of the route, and the sentiments of the reigning monarch.

The Emperor Claudius little relished the arrival of these monks, and Rodrigues entirely failed in every attempt at conviction on the points at issue —that the pope, as representative of Christ upon earth, was the true head of all Christians, and that there was no salvation out of the pale of the Catholic church. Dismissed with the reply that the people of Æthiopia would not lightly abandon the faith of their forefathers, the monk retired to work upon the mind of the monarch by the brilliancy of his controversial writing; but a lengthy treatise on the true faith produced no happy result, and the envoy, disgusted with his reception, returned shortly afterwards to Goâ.

The spiritual conclave was plunged into consternation by the untoward intelligence; and after much mature deliberation it was resolved that the dignity of the patriarch, and of the great King of Portugal, could not be exposed to the consequences

attending the ill favour of the Emperor of Abyssinia; and that therefore the prelate should still remain the guest of the Bishop of Nicea, whilst the daring and restless Oviedo, with a small train of attendants, attempted the business.

Arriving in safety, the Jesuit experienced a most friendly reception from the Emperor Claudius; and although the letters of recommendation from the pope were received with mistrust and impatience, the habitual mildness of the monarch restrained him from any overt act of oppression. Deceived by this calm behaviour, the bishop, during a second audience, was sufficiently foolhardy to represent, in the most insolent language, the enormous errors under which the Emperor laboured, and to demand imperatively whether or not he intended to submit himself to the authority of the successor of St. Peter, and thus remove the heavy obligation under which his empire already groaned. King Claudius replied that he was well inclined towards the Portuguese nation—that he would grant lands and settlements in his country—that permission would not be withheld to the private exercise of the religion of the West; but that as the Abyssinian church had been for ages united to the charge of the patriarch of Alexandria, a subject of such serious alteration must be canvassed before a full assembly of divines.

Indignant at what he termed Æthiopian perfidy, but still buoyed up with the faint hope of realizing

his object, Oviedo changed his mode of attack, and addressed a laboured remonstrance to the monarch, written in the hypocritical tone of false friendship, earnestly entreating him to recall to his remembrance the assistance rendered by Europeans to his afflicted country, and the many promises made by his sire in the day of his urgent distress; imploring him at the same time to preserve a stern vigilance upon the evil influence of the Empress and of the ministers of state; "for in matters of faith the love of kindred must give way to the love of Christ, and in similar situations the nearest relation often proves the bitterest enemy to the salvation of the soul."

This insidious reasoning was, however, vainly expended upon the intelligent Claudius, and served but to turn his heart further from the Roman and his cause. The offer of a public controversy on points of disputed faith being shortly afterwards accepted, the Emperor entered the lists in presence of the assembled court, and by his clear knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, utterly defeated the subtilties of the Italian priest; and thus, notwithstanding the conviction of the Portuguese missionary that by supernatural aid he had triumphantly refuted all the arguments urged by his illustrious antagonist, it was fully decreed by the Abyssinian conference, that neither king nor people owed any obligation or obedience whatsoever to the church of Rome.

Still Oviedo was far from being reduced to silence. Treatise after treatise was published on the contro-

versy, to confound the minds of the Æthiopians. The errors of the Alexandrian faith were fiercely attacked in every form and fashion; and the superior beauties of the Catholic religion fully expounded. But no advantage resulted. Rejoinders and confutations followed fast from the insulted clergy; and the bishop, furious at the thoughts of his futile exertions to gain a footing in the country—entertaining no hope of making one single convert, whether among prince or people—resolved upon a last effort in the struggle. On the fifth of February, 1559, he issued his spiritual ban over the land, proclaiming that the entire nation of Abyssinia, high and low, learned and ignorant, having refused to obey the church of Rome—practising the unholy rite of circumcision—scrupling to eat the flesh of the hog and the hare—and indulging in many other flagrant enormities—were delivered over to the judgment of the spiritual court, to be punished in person and goods, in public and in private, by every means the faithful could devise.

But the folly of issuing this curious rescript without any means of enforcing it was fully appreciated; and the tyrannical conduct of the bishop did but serve to strengthen the Emperor in the bonds of his own faith, finding, as was observed by an historian of the times, "that popery and its wiles were the more dangerous and reprehensible, as the veil was withdrawn from before the spirit of her tenets."

There is every reason to believe that the succeeding invasion of the Adaïel was procured through the treacherous designs of the Jesuits, but the event again proved disastrous to their cause. Although the revenge of the baffled bishop was allayed in a torrent of blood, yet the death of the mild, moderate, and liberal Claudius, who perished on the battle-field, shed a baneful influence on their ensuing efforts; and the sceptre devolved into the hands of his brother Adam, a haughty and vindictive prince, who is depicted in Portuguese records as "cruel and hard of heart, and utterly insensible to the beauteous mysteries of the Catholic faith."

Swearing vengeance against the Latins, to whose treason he attributed the murder of his brother and the ruin of his country, the new monarch seized all the estates which had been granted to the Portuguese for rendered service, and threatened the bishop and his colleagues with instantaneous death if they presumed to propagate the errors of the Romish church; and on a humble remonstrance being attempted, in the violence of his wrath, he rushed upon the missionary with a drawn sword, vowing to immolate him upon the spot. "The weapon, however," say the holy fathers, "dropped miraculously from his impious hand," and for a season the last extremity of vengeance was exchanged for a system of vile durance.

Portuguese troops in the meantime arrived from Goâ, and the Bahr Negásh, "the lord of the sea-

coast," bought over by the gold of India, and stirred up by the wily emissaries of the viceroy, assembled his forces in rebellion. Marching with his European allies to the capital, he defeated and slew the Emperor in a pitched battle, and rescued the Jesuit missionaries from their unpleasant captivity.

Warned by former difficulty and distress, the worthy fathers now assumed a more modest and humble demeanour, and were allowed to settle again in their old haunt of Maiguagua, where they remained for a time unmolested by the new Emperor Malek Sáshed, who inherited all the horror of his father to the Catholic creed, although tempered by the mildness of his uncle Claudius. But the jealous monks had not yet relinquished their hope of advancement, and bending to the pressure of the times, the deep plot was veiled under the garb of passive obedience. The most pressing solicitations were despatched to Goâ for assistance; and the dauntless Oviedo pledged himself with six hundred staunch Europeans to convert, not only the empire of Abyssinia, but all the countries adjacent.

The scheme, however, did not suit the politics of the day; and in 1560 the bishop received an order from the head of his society to repair forthwith to his more promising charge in Japan. Loth to abandon all his favourite projects of ambition in the country, and utterly reckless of truth, he addressed the most specious letters to the pope, hold-

ing out a certain prospect of prostrating the church of Æthiopia before the apostolic throne, whilst to his immediate superior he dilated upon the richness of the land, and the mines of pure gold which he falsely asserted to exist in every province of the kingdom. But his artful motives were thoroughly pierced by the more wily successor of St. Peter; and vessels soon after arrived on the coast of Africa, to convey the reluctant fathers to the monastery of St. Xavier, in Goâ.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RELIGIOUS WAR.

Miserable indeed appeared the chance of conversion; and after a fierce struggle of thirty years, there remained not one priest of the Romish faith to administer the sacraments to the numerous European settlers and descendants in the country. Even the Jesuits themselves lost heart for the time; but the zeal of Philip the Second stirred the dying embers, and fresh candidates for strife, honour, and martyrdom, were soon in the field.

Peter Pero Pays and Antonio de Montzerado, disguised as Armenian merchants, first attempted the perilous undertaking; but being wrecked upon the Arabian coast, they were recognized as Christian ministers, and languished during seven years in a Moslem dungeon.

Goâ next poured forth her priests to the ineffectual contest. In seeking the promised land, Abraham de Georgis was discovered in Turkish garb on the island of Massowah, and the governor swore by the holy Prophet, that, since the káfir had donned the attire of the true believer, he should also adopt

the tenets of the true faith, or die the death of a dog. But the Jesuit clung to his creed, and suffered accordingly; and, shortly afterwards, Jean Baptiste being detected in assumed costume, by the Turks of Comera, he also shared the same fate as his immediate predecessor, in the thorny path of martyrdom.

Thus even the road itself seemed to close, and all intercourse was denied with a country wherein the presence of Europeans was neither desired nor permitted; and which would have been suffered to remain unmolested, had not exaggerated ideas of its wealth still pervaded the imagination of all classes throughout the western world.

Don Alexis de Menezez, the zealous Archbishop of Goâ, who had already with fire and sword propagated Christianity throughout Malabar, now entered the lists, and his sagacious and discerning mind selected the vicar of St. Anne as a fit tool for the execution of his project. Melchior Sylva, a converted Brahmin, might, from his colour and language, pass through the Turkish wicket. His zeal was great as that of his superior, and the valuable presents whereof he was made the bearer, might prove a bait sufficiently tempting to lure the simple Abyssinian into a fresh connexion.

The intelligence of his safe arrival, and of the gracious reception of the presents, again roused the ardent spirit of the order of Jesus; and Peter Pays was quickly ransomed from the Arabs, and

despatched with a full train of priests to Æthiopia, where he arrived in September of the year 1603.

Superior in every respect to his predecessors, this missionary, instead of attempting to carry his measures by force and overbearing insolence, sought the softer path of insinuation; and whilst his extensive knowledge and plausible address proved strong recommendations in his favour, many circumstances also conspired to forward his views. The country was in a most unsettled state, and the assistance of a few Portuguese troops could turn the scale of war. The condition of the church was low and miserable. Eighty years of incessant strife and distraction had crushed the very name of learning and literature. Few persons were to be found who could read, write, or dispute. Ignorant and unworthy men filled every sacred office; and the ancient defenders of the Alexandrian faith had been swept away on the battle-field.

Amidst wars, and rumours of wars, Peter quietly settled with his followers at Maiguagua. Schools were opened, and the wonder ran through the land, that youths of tender age could refute the most learned sages of the wilderness of Walkayet. The curiosity of Za Dengel, the temporary occupant of the throne, was excited, and Peter, with his erudite pupils, was summoned to the court.

Prompted by the hope of obtaining assistance from Portugal, this weak prince, under an oath of secrecy, immediately embraced the religion of his

guest. But his time was fully occupied in the more worldly object of strengthening himself upon a throne to which he had been elevated by his evil genius; and the falling away from the faith of his forefathers being at length whispered abroad, a rebellion was the consequence.

The approaching storm having been perceived by the monk, he withdrew from court before the burst of a revolution, which for some time crushed his every hope of success. The Emperor was slain. New aspirants strove for the ascendency; and war reigned for a season throughout the entire land.

Confident in the near approach of Portuguese troops, which had been requested when Sylva carried to India the tidings of the first conversion, Peter now resolved upon the bold game of espousing the weaker party, and thus gaining a firmer hold in event of success. The expected reinforcements did not, however, arrive in time; and the defeat and death of his *proteyé* was followed by the advancement of the pretender Susneus to the throne of the empire.

Notwithstanding his appearance as a declared partizan in the opposing ranks, Peter's abilities as an architect now created a fresh diversion in his favour. The novel idea of a two-storied edifice engrossed the thoughts of the reigning king; and men flocked from the remotest parts of the country to gaze upon a fabric of stone, which was considered to be one of the wonders of the world. A

missionary possessing the varied abilities and acquirements of Pays could not be long in gaining ascendency over a rude and illiterate monarch; and by address and perseverance he had soon effected that which the threats and violence of his predecessors had vainly attempted during a long course of years.

Ras Sela Christos, brother to the Emperor, was the first-fruit of the harvest. Partaking of the holy supper with the Latins, he publicly embraced their religion, and many chiefs and nobles followed his illustrious example. Crowded assemblies were held, in which the eloquence of the Jesuits entirely bore down the feeble efforts of the ignorant and uncultivated natives. The holiness of life which was strictly preserved among the neophytes and proselytes of the Catholics, added to the impression entertained of their wisdom; and the introduction of useful arts, raised the glory of the fathers still higher in the land; and the prospect of the aid of disciplined soldiers from the West overturned the last remaining scruple in the mind of the monarch.

An edict was published interdicting all persons from holding office who were not well inclined towards the Latin religion; and severe punishments were threatened for the promulgation of ancient doctrines. Assistance was solicited from Rome and Lisbon; and the work of European persecution favourably commenced, by scourging with whips

all those stubborn monks who refused to forego their ancient belief.

Abba Simeon, the Abuna, repaired to the court to remonstrate with the Emperor on the scandalous interference with his prerogatives in convening meetings and authorising debates upon ecclesiastical matters; but his pride was timely soothed by the royal assurance that all had been undertaken for the benefit of true religion, and that the subject should be fully discussed in his own presence. Again the subtilties and dialectics of the missionaries prevailed; and the total defeat of the Patriarch and his clergy was followed by a second more severe ordinance, awarding the penalty of death to all who should henceforth deny the two natures of Christ.

Wonderful was the sensation created by this severe edict, so diametrically at variance with the mild spirit of religion, and with all the ancient usages of the land. Aware of the feelings of the strong party at court, as well as of the entire body of the people, the Abuna placarded on the doors of the chapels an excommunication of all who should accept the religion of the Franks; and the monarch, irritated by this resistance, published a manifesto, "That his subjects should forthwith embrace the Catholic faith."

This served as the signal-trumpet for the fight. All classes armed themselves in defence of their religion; and Ælius, the king's son-in-law, placed himself at the head of the malcontents in Tigré.

Not yet thoroughly prepared for the struggle, the Emperor found it convenient for a time to temporize, and requested one further debate, which was to prove final between the disputants. The mild Abuna listened to the proposal, and accompanied by a large train of monks appeared in the royal camp, whilst the Jesuit and his colleagues advanced into the arena from the opposite side. The controversy was renewed, and raged fiercely for six days; but disputes in religion are seldom adjusted by the reasoning of the doctors, and the parties withdrew mutually incensed against each other.

One further effort was made to restore the disturbed harmony. The Empress Hamilmála, and many of the courtiers, with tears implored the king to desist from his undertaking; and the patriarch and the clergy, throwing themselves prostrate on the earth, embraced his knees, and entreated him to turn a deaf ear to the poisonous insinuations of the deceitful Jesuits, and graciously to allow his subjects to remain faithful to the religion of their forefathers. But the heart of the monarch remained closed to the prayer. The Abuna quitted the court, plunged in the deepest distress, and a bloody war ensued, which shook the empire to its foundation.

When Ælius fully understood the last resolution taken by his father-in-law, to defend the Catholics and their religion, he publicly appealed to the

people of Tigré, and proclaimed that all who were disposed to embrace the jesuitical faith might repair to the deluded Emperor, whilst those who held to the ancient belief should forthwith gather under his standard. Finding himself shortly afterwards at the head of a large army, he marched towards the royal camp, resolved to establish the received doctrine of the land, or to perish in the attempt.

Abba Simeon. who had attained the venerable age of one hundred years, joined the army of the defenders of the Alexandrian faith; and in giving them his patriarchal blessing, assured the soldiery that all who should fall in the combat died the death of the martyr, and would receive the reward in heaven. The desired effect was produced, and the hearts of the entire force burned with one eager zeal to meet the accursed enemies of their religion.

On the appearance of the inflamed force a reconciliation was attempted and the daughter of the Emperor was made the bearer of terms to her rebel lord. Her tears and entreaties were, however, totally disregarded. The impetuous youth prepared for instant attack; and the princess had barely time to regain her father's tent, when hostilities were commenced.

The soldiers of the viceroy rushed furiously upon the royal encampment, and Ælius succeeded in forcing his way, at the head of a small body of

troops, to the very pavilion of his father-in-law. But he was here struck from his horse by a stone, and stabbed upon the ground. A panic seized the army of the fallen leader, and the rabble, casting away their arms, fled in all directions.

The aged Abuna found himself alone and deserted in the same spot which he had occupied during the attack. His years and high clerical bearing disarmed the violence of the Abyssinian soldiery; but a Portuguese partizan at length threw himself upon the patriarch, and, regardless of his white and venerable hairs, transfixed him with a spear. A frightful massacre ensued; and the heads of the principal leaders of the unsuccessful rebellion were exposed on the gates of the capital as a bloody warning to the seditious.

CHAPTER XIV.

TEMPORARY SUBMISSION TO THE POPE OF ROME.

STRENGTHENED by this signal victory, other points of the Alexandrian creed were attacked in succession; and the time of the Jesuits was fully occupied in the translation into Æthiopic of sundry dogmatical treatises on subjects of disputed faith. But the barbarism of the language was despised by most —the Latin interpolation abhorred as magic by all— and a furious paper controversy raged for a time; until the Abyssinians becoming scurrilous, the wrath of the monarch was again roused, and he issued a severe edict, wherein the people were forbidden from celebrating the Jewish Sabbath, which from time immemorial had hitherto been sacred.

The inhabitants of Begemeder flew to arms; and people from all parts of the country, groaning under the yoke of foreign oppression, poured in to join the standard of rebellion which Joanel had reared on the plains of his government. A horde of Galla, delighting in the confusion, offered their assistance, and the most haughty conditions were speedily conveyed to court from a large assembly in arms.

Again the most earnest entreaties were employed

to induce the emperor to compromise; but influenced by the words of the Jesuits, he called together his principal chieftains, monks, and learned men, and in their presence solemnly declared that he would defend the Catholic religion to the last drop of his blood; adding, that it was the first duty of his subjects to obey their legitimate monarch. Energetic measures were forthwith agreed upon, and, at the head of a large array, the king proceeded in person to the war. Joanel, finding himself too weak to contend in the plains, withdrew to the inaccessible mountains, where a blockade by the royal troops soon caused a scarcity of provisions. His forces gradually deserted, and he himself escaping to the Galla, was pursued, betrayed, and put to death.

This reverse sustained by the defenders of the old cause did not, however, intimidate the inhabitants of Damot, a province situated on the borders of the Nile; for scarcely had the emperor reached his capital, when the population rose *en masse*, with the determination of dethroning a monarch who so basely truckled to a foreign yoke, and of driving from the land the authors of its distraction. An army of fourteen thousand warriors was speedily organized; and monks and hermits, burning with zeal in the cause, emerged from the cave and from the wilderness to join the fast-swelling ranks.

Ras Sela Christos marched against the rebels, but desertion considerably thinned his troops; and

he confronted the enemy with barely one-half the numerical strength of their formidable array. Governor of the province, and greatly beloved by the people, a proposal was tendered to him, that if he would only lend his assistance in burning the monkish books and hanging the worthy fathers themselves upon tall trees, he might be seated upon the imperial throne of his ancestors. But the general, despising the offer, and resting confident in the firelocks of the Portuguese, rushed to the attack. The combat raged fiercely for a time. Four hundred monks, devoting themselves to death, carried destruction through the royal host; but the tide of victory set at length in his favour, and after a fearful carnage on either side, he found himself master of the field.

Great rejoicings at court followed the news of this success. Peter declared that Heaven, by the extermination of his enemies, had given the desired sign that the Roman Catholic should be the religion of the land; and the emperor, who, partly from fear of his subjects, and partly from dislike to relinquish his supernumerary wives and concubines, had not as yet publicly professed the Latin religion, now openly embraced the faith, and confessed his sins to the triumphant Jesuit.

A letter containing the royal sentiments was published for the benefit of the nation:—"The king henceforth obeys the pope of Rome, the successor of Peter, chief of the apostles, who could neither

err in doctrine nor in conduct; and all subjects are hereby advised to adopt the same creed." And the missionary, who now reasonably imagined that the work was satisfactorily concluded, wrote to the courts of Rome and Lisbon, requesting that a patriarch and twenty ecclesiastics might be immediately sent to the vineyard; adding, that "although the harvest was plentiful, the labourers were but few."

These happy and unlooked-for tidings were received by Philip the Fourth of Spain. Mutio Vitelesi, the general of the Jesuits, offered to proceed in person, but the pope refused permission, as he had done in the case of his predecessor Loyola; and Alphonso Mendez, a learned doctor of the society of Jesus, was inaugurated at Lisbon with all the customary solemnities.

After suffering much difficulty and delay in his passage, the Portuguese patriarch at length arrived on the Danákil coast with a large train of priests, servants, masons, and musicians. The same greediness and cupidity were experienced amongst the savage Adaïel that the traveller finds at the present day—baseness and avarice having stamped their character for generations; but the troubles of a weary march were soon forgotten in the cordial reception which awaited the party at the royal camp; and the day was finally fixed when the homage of the king and of the country should be rendered to the Pope of Rome.

On the 11th of February, 1626, the court and the nobles of the land were assembled in the open air. Two rich thrones were occupied by the monarch and his distinguished guest, and a surrounding multitude gazed upon the imposing ceremony in silence. "The hour is come," exclaimed Mendez, "when the king shall satisfy the debt of his ancestors, and submit himself and his people to the only true head of the church." A copy of the Gospel was produced, and the monarch, falling upon his knees, took the oath of homage. "We, King of the kings of Æthiopia, believe and confess that the Pope of Rome is the true successor of the Apostle St. Peter, and that he holds the same power, dignity, and dominion, over the whole Christian church. Therefore we promise, offer, and swear sincere obedience to the holy father Urban, by God's grace Pope and our Lord, and throw humbly at his feet our person and our kingdom."

As the emperor rose from his position, Ras Sela Christos, suddenly drawing his sword, shouted aloud, "What is now done is done for ever; and whoso in future disclaims the act, shall taste the sharp edge of this trusty weapon. I do homage only to true Catholic kings." The monks, clergy, and noblemen followed the example of their superiors; and the assembly was closed by a public edict, proclaimed through the royal herald, that all Abyssinians should, under pain of death, forthwith embrace the Roman religion.

Palaces and revenues were set apart for the ministers of the new faith; seminaries for youth were established throughout the country, and baptism and ordination went on in peace. The success of the Jesuits increased rapidly, and many thousand souls were enrolled, who had been converted from the delusions of the Alexandrian creed.

The trial of two years failed, however, to convince the nation of the benefits of the new religion; and the emperor and patriarchs could not deceive themselves in the fact, that the cause advanced rather in appearance than in reality. Missionaries who entered the native churches were found murdered in their beds; the most disparaging stories were everywhere circulated regarding the holy fathers, and more particularly on the representation of scriptural performances at the Paschal feast, when demons being introduced by the Romans upon the stage, the spectators rushed simultaneously from the theatre, exclaiming, "Alas! they have brought with them devils from the infernal regions," and the tale spread like wildfire through the land.

Nothing daunted by the unfortunate fate of Ælius and Joanel, Tekla Georgis, another son-in-law of the emperor, with a large body of the discontented, rose to defend the religion of their forefathers. Burning the crosses and rosaries, together with a Jesuit priest who fell into their hands, the party rapidly increased, and the emperor was compelled to march an army to quell the insurrection. The

rebels were completely routed by Rebaxus, the viceroy of Tigré, and all who fell into his hands, men, women, and children, were barbarously massacred. Georgis and his sister Adera concealed themselves in a cave during three days, but were at length discovered and brought before the irritated emperor. Condemned by the advice of the Jesuits to be burned to death as a heretic, Georgis was allowed by the monarch publicly to solicit the patriarch to be admitted into the Roman church; but it being afterwards considered politic to imagine that his intentions were insincere, the unfortunate prince was hung in front of the palace in presence of the whole court; and his devoted sister, fifteen days afterwards, suffered the same fate upon the same tree, notwithstanding that the most strenuous efforts were made to save her life by the queen and by all classes of society.

To increase the dread effects of his tyranny, the emperor now issued a manifesto, that even as he had punished with death the obstinacy of his own son-in-law, so would he of a surety not spare any who in future committed a like transgression. The remarks of the worthy missionary Antoine, regarding this execution, will show the spirit which animated the fathers in their course of persecution, so novel in the annals of Abyssinia, and so contrary to the mildness of the Christian faith. "He who reads with attention the history of Æthiopia, will observe, that at no previous period was such ardent

zeal displayed for the honour of religion, and a direct miracle, indeed, must have induced the emperor to hang his own son-in-law in the blessed cause."

Dazzled by the success that had hitherto attended their measures, the patriarch and his colleagues now plunged headlong into proceedings which eventually proved disastrous to their cause. Excommunications were lightly launched in civil disputes, and the soul of every counseller of the state was committed to the devil if he dared to question the authority of the foreign priest. Conspiracies were hatched against the imperial person; and the body of a distinguished nonconforming ecclesiastic, which had been interred within the walls of the church, was exhumed by order of the Portuguese prelate, and thrown to the wild beasts—an action which raised the indignation of the Æthiopians to the highest pitch against a set of men "who had ever the words of religion in the mouth, but who, after persecuting the living, denied even to the dead that repose which neither Pagan nor Mohammadan ever disturbed."

The detestation of the fathers and their religion daily waxed stronger in the hearts of all. Their great patron, Ras Sela Christos, was deprived of power and property for seditious attempts; and the bold mountaineers of Begemeder at length seized their long spears to uphold the faith of their ancestors. The viceroy was driven from the pro-

vince, and Meleaxus, a youth of royal blood, appointed defender of the ancient religion, and leader of the armed host of peasants who flocked to his standard from all parts of the country, but especially from Lasta, the seat of the bravest warriors of the land.

To quell this insurrection, the Emperor assembled in Gojam an army of twenty-five thousand men, and attacked the insurgents among their strongholds. His troops were, however, repulsed at all points with the loss of many officers and men, and he was reluctantly obliged to retreat to the plains. Deputies followed from the victorious camp, to supplicate him to take pity upon his subjects, and to dismiss those evil-minded strangers who had so long oppressed Abyssinia. The royal army was in no heart or condition to renew hostilities. Rumours went through the land that angels sent from heaven had proclaimed the restoration of the ancient religion; and in the general excitement the king perceived that his own authority would be fatally compromised unless some concessions were made.

The patriarch was nevertheless inflexible; and letters were at the same time received from Rome, instigating the emperor to combat stoutly with his rebellious subjects, and extending to Æthiopia the general absolution of the great year of Jubilee. But the unhappy inhabitants laughed the offer of

this indulgence to scorn; and were utterly unable to comprehend by what authority the pope held in his possession the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER XV.

EXPULSION OF THE JESUITS FROM ÆTHIOPIA.

THE civil war continued, meanwhile, to rage with great expenditure of life, and with alternate success on either side. Enticed into the plain, the enemy were generally worsted by the royal troops, but among the recesses of their native rocks the mountaineers had always the advantage. No sign of intended submission could be observed; and the monarch, becoming suspicious of the Jesuits, who were erecting forts and strongholds under the guise of churches and residences, lent a favourable ear to the entreaties of his subjects.

A second remonstrance was penned, wherein he forcibly set forth to the Portuguese bishop, "that the Roman religion had not been introduced into the country by the miracles or the preaching of the fathers, but by royal edict and ordinance, in opposition to the wish of the entire population; and that the prelate must devise some milder measures for the furtherance of the true faith."

Foreseeing a heavy storm in case of refusal, Mendez reluctantly complied with the proposal of a modified church code, under the restriction

that no public manifesto should announce the change, which must be gradually and silently introduced. The ancient liturgy and the ancient holydays were thus restored, and the celebration of the Jewish Sabbath once again permitted.

But the concession was insufficient, and came too late to pacify the turbulent mountaineers of Lasta, who had been altogether victorious during the war. They would listen to no modification of their first demand; but imperatively insisted upon the complete re-establishment of their ancient ecclesiastical institution, together with the expulsion of the foreigners from the land.

The liberty and the customs of highlanders are seldom invaded with success; and a religion detested by the common people cannot, without much difficulty, be introduced by the prince. Weary of so many rebellions, and murders, and excommunications, the king, in his advanced age, began to view with an unfavourable eye the firebrand authors of these disturbances. Suspecting his brother and the patriarch of seditious views—offended by the contumacy of his subjects, and the increasing diminution of his own authority—disgusted with the present state of affairs, and apprehensive of future events—he now seriously bethought him of restoring the church to its original footing. But the rebellion must, in the first instance, be quelled; and having with this view concluded an alliance with the Galla, he marched towards Lasta.

Twenty thousand peasants, confident of victory, descending from their mountains, rushed into the plain to meet the royal force. The two armies for a time remained in sight in that still calmness which precedes the earthquake. At length the Galla cavalry dashing at speed on the crowded masses of the enemy, threw them into complete confusion—a fierce combat lasted until the going down of the sun—and the field of battle was left covered with eight thousand bodies of the insurgents.

Throwing themselves prostrate before the triumphant monarch on this scene of carnage, the vanquished peasants expressed their grief in the following lively terms:—"Who are these men," they asked with groans, "whom you now behold bathed in blood? Are they Moslems, or Pagans, or even the enemies of the kingdom? No, they are Christians—they are all thy subjects, knit together by the most tender bonds of blood, friendship, and affection. Those warriors who now lie lifeless at thy feet, would, under a better government, have proved the bulwarks of thy throne, and the terror of those very men by whose hands they have fallen. The very heathen blush at thy cruelty, and call thee renegade for having abandoned the religion of thy fathers. Cease, O emperor! in mercy cease to prolong a struggle which must end in the downfall of the throne, and the ruin of all religion in the land!"

The empress also mingled her tears with the

groans of the wounded petitioners, and adjured the king for the love of God, and in the name of future generations, to take pity upon his subjects, and desist from preparing a sepulchre for himself and for his family. "What have you gained by this battle?" she exclaimed. "You have introduced into the kingdom hordes of pagan Galla, who detest yourself equally with your religion; but futile will be your attempt to establish in Æthiopia a form of worship which is unknown to the greater part of your people, and to the remainder is known only to be resisted to the last drop of their blood."

These representations sunk deep into the heart of the emperor; and instead of proceeding in triumph to his capital, he retired to a secluded spot to give vent to his feelings, and bewail the loss he had created. The Galla troops were dismissed; and having collected all the principal monks and clergy, he announced his resolution of allowing the nation to return to the faith of their forefathers.

Immediately on this intelligence, the patriarch hurried with all the Jesuit fathers to soothe the ruffled mood of the monarch. "I had fondly imagined," exclaimed Mendez, "that we were the victors, but behold we are the vanquished; and the rebels, routed and put to flight, have obtained all that they desire. Call to mind how many fields thou hast won with the assistance of God and the Portuguese, and remember that thou didst embrace the true faith of thine own free will. We have been

sent unto thy charge by the Pope of Rome, and by the King of Portugal. Beware of irritating great potentates to just indignation. They be indeed far off, but God is nigh at hand; and thy apostasy will defile thy name and that of thy nation, and will leave an everlasting tarnish upon the Lion of the tribe of Judah, which now glitters in the standard of Æthiopia." On the conclusion of this harangue, all threw themselves at his feet, and entreated an immediate order to execution, rather than a confirmation from his lips of the rash resolution that he had taken.

Retaining a too lively recollection of the streams of blood that had been poured out upon the plains of Lasta, the emperor quietly allowed the Jesuits to arise, and unmoved by their earnest prayers and entreaties, replied shortly, "that his adherence to the Catholic faith had already caused the slaughter of a great portion of his subjects, and that he would have no further dealings whatever with their doctrines."

The film fell from before the eyes of the discomfited monks. The friends of the Alexandrian faith, rallying round the throne, united their utmost efforts to strengthen the emperor in his resolves; and the rumour spread abroad that on the feast of St. John the Baptist the ancient religion was to be re-established throughout the land. Thousands assembled in the capital on that day to assist in the ceremony;

and, although temporarily disappointed, the event clearly proved that this act of justice could no longer be safely delayed.

Every art and stratagem was still resorted to by the patriarch to put off the evil day; but the Emperor, roused at length by the harsh and uncompromising character of the Jesuit, fiercely exclaimed, "Has, then, the sceptre departed from mine hand for ever?"—and the royal trumpets suddenly sounded through the streets of Gondar, as the herald announced the following proclamation to the empire:—

"Listen and hear! We formerly recommended to you the adoption of the Roman Catholic creed, on the firm conviction that it was the only true one; but numbers of our subjects having sacrificed their lives for the religion of their ancestors, we henceforth accord its free exercise unto all. Let the priests resume possession of their churches, and worship the God of their forefathers. Farewell. and rejoice."

It is not possible to describe the rapture with which this welcome edict was received. The praises of the Emperor resounded from every quarter. The rosaries and the chaplets of the Jesuits were tossed out of doors, and burned in a heap. Men and women danced for joy in the streets, and the song of liberation burst from the lips of the disenthralled multitude.

"The flock of Æthiopia has escaped from the hyenas of the
West.
The doctrine of St. Mark is the column of our church.
Let all rejoice and sing hallelujahs,
For the sun of our deliverance has lighted up the land."

Thus perished the hopes of a mission which, for craft and cruelty, has been seldom equalled in the annals of time. Whilst Rome must indeed have been prompted by no ordinary motive to persevere so pertinaciously in a work of conversion, through all the horrors of banishment and martyrdom, the unworthy means resorted to by the dauntless but unsuccessful agents employed in the enterprize, have left an indelible stain upon the page of her history.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CHURCH, SECOND GREAT POWER IN SHOA.

CHRISTIANITY is the national religion throughout the more elevated portions of Abyssinia; but the wild Galla has overrun her fairest provinces, and located himself in her most pleasant places—the bigoted Moslem crowds thick upon the skirts of her distracted empire, and the tenets that she professes are base, foolish, and degrading. Engrafted on the superstitions of the Jew, the Mohammadan, and the Pagan—promulgated by rude and ignorant men—and received by a people emerging only into the first stage of civilization—the light of religion must have been feeble, even in the beginning; but as it was imparted, so it still remains. Sects and parties have arisen, and province has been banded against province in all the fiery wrath of the zealot; but, lost in the maze of subtle controversy, these internal wars have raged for generations without disturbing the original doctrine; and the same errors of the church prevail to this day throughout the land, as when first propounded in the beginning of the fourth century.

The Abuna or Archbishop is the spiritual chief

of Æthiopia. Consecrated by the Patriarch of Alexandria, and possessing with rich revenues the intelligence of other lands, the Primate is universally feared and respected throughout the empire, and all religious differences and dissensions must be carried for the final decision of his Holiness. Princes and rulers pay implicit deference to his high behest, and, seated on the ground before his episcopal throne, receive with the utmost respect his every wish and advice. Feuds and quarrels betwixt state and state are satisfactorily arranged in his presence; and war, tyranny, and violence, are controlled by his all-commanding voice of mildness and benevolence. But whilst his influence is thus potent, the extent of his diocese is also great; and many local difficulties opposing the pastoral visit to the extremities of his see, the kingdom of Shoa has for ages been deprived of the advantages accruing from the residence of an archbishop.

In the hand of the Abuna is vested the exclusive power of consecration. Bishops, priests, and deacons, can from him alone receive holy office. He only it is who grants absolution for heavy offences against either God or man; and the ark of a church, whether newly constructed or polluted by the unhallowed touch of a Mohammadan, must be purified by his hands with the holy *merom*, before being entitled to that high adoration which it thenceforward receives.

The second place in spiritual dignity is filled by

the Etcheguê, the Grand Prior of the monks of Debra Libanos. Seated on the throne of Tekla Haïmanót, one of the first founders of the orders of Seclusion, he engrosses the management of all the various monastic establishments throughout the land, and in his hands remains the charge of the existing literature and education. Deeply versed in the subtilties of theology, his opinion is held of the highest import in the never-ceasing disputes upon the uninteresting subjects of false faith which occupy the mind of the Abyssinian divine; but his authority extends only to the simple admittance into the monkish order, and to granting absolution for minor offences.

The Comus, or Bishop, who ranks next above the Priest, is without diocese or even authority over the inferior members of the church; and his peculiar function is to bless and purify the sacred ark, should it accidentally receive the impure touch of deacon or layman; to repeat the prayer of admission, and sign the cross on the skull-cap of the candidate for monastic seclusion; and to afford absolution for trivial offences against the conscience.

Twelve thousand clerical drones,

"Fruges consumere nati,"

fatten in idleness on the labour of the working classes, and employ their influence to foster the prejudice, bigotry, and superstition of their flock. The kiss imprinted on the hand of one of these

licentious shepherds being believed to purify the body from all sin, they are treated with the highest respect and veneration, are fed and caressed both by high and low, and invariably addressed as "Father."

Upon payment each of a few pieces of salt, many hundred candidates receive the breath of the Holy Ghost from the Abuna in a single day; but every Abyssinian being ignorant of his own age, it is essential to the reception of priestly orders that the beard should have appeared. Deacons are chosen from among boys and children, because on reaching maturity the life of the adult is not always distinguished by that spotless purity which is held indispensable. The juvenile novices are present during divine service in capacity of servitors, and they complete the requisite number at the administration of the holy communion.

The father confessor is bound to the strictest secrecy; and it is believed that on this point a dread oath is taken before ordination, when all the mysteries of religion are expounded by the Abuna, and especially those which have reference to the preparation of bread for the holy supper. In a small house styled Bethlehem, which rises immediately behind every church, the mysterious ceremony is performed. The deacon can alone bake the cake; and the most vigilant guard is invariably preserved against the approach or intrusion of females or other improper visiters during the hour of solemn occupation.

Certain revenues and estates are set apart for the support of each clerical establishment; and to ensure the proper distribution, an Alaka, or chief, is selected by the monarch from either class of society. Whilst a successful foray is invariably followed by donations from the throne, the safe return from a journey is acknowledged by an offering on the part of all private individuals; and the shade of the venerable juniper-trees, which adorn the churchyard on the summit of the greenest knolls, is ever crowded with groups of sleek, hooded priests, who bask in the enjoyment of idle indulgence.

There are, perhaps, more churches in Abyssinia than in any other part of the Christian world; and he who has erected one believes that he has atoned for every sin. But even the best are very miserable edifices of wattle plastered with mud, only to be distinguished from the surrounding hovels by a thin coating of whitewash, which is dashed over the outside to point with the finger of pride to the peculiar privilege of the two great powers in the land. Circular in form, they have a door to each quarter of the compass, the apex of the conical thatch being surmounted by a brazen cross, which is usually adorned with ostrich eggs, whilst the same depraved and heathenish taste pervades the decorations of the interior. Sculpture is strictly forbidden; but the walls are bedaubed with paintings of the patron saint of the church, the blessed Virgin, and a truly incongruous assemblage of cherubim and fallen

angels, with the evil one himself enveloped in hell-flames. Timbrels and crutches depend in picturesque confusion from the bare rafters of the roof; no ceiling protects the head from the descent of the lizard and the spider; and the *tout ensemble* of the slovenly Abyssinian church presents the strangest imaginable picture of cobweb finery.

The Jewish temple consisted of three distinct divisions—the fore-court, the holy, and the holy of holies. To the first laymen were admitted, to the second only the priest, and to the third the high-priest alone. All entrance was denied to the Pagan,—a custom which is rigorously enforced in Abyssinia; and her churches are in like manner divided into three parts.

Eight feet in breadth, the first compartment stretches, after the fashion of a corridor, entirely around the building. It is styled *Kene Máhelet*, and, strewed throughout with green rushes, forms the scene of morning worship. To the right of the entrance is the seat of honour for priests and erudite scribes; and beyond this court, save on certain occasions, the bare foot of the unlearned layman cannot pass.

Makdas is the second compartment. This is the sanctuary in which the priests officiate, and a corner is set apart for laymen during the administration of the holy supper, whilst a cloth screens the mysteries of the interior. Here also hang, arranged around the walls, the bones of many deceased worthies,

which have been carefully gathered from the newly opened sepulchre, and are deposited by the hand of the priest in cotton bags. By the nearest relative, the first opportunity is embraced of transporting these mouldering emblems of mortality to the sacred resting-place of Debra Libanos, where the living and the dead are alike blessed with a rich treasure of righteousness, since the remains of Tekla Haïmanót, the patron saint of Abyssinia, still shed a bright halo over the scene of his miracles upon earth.

To *Kedis Kedisen*, the holy of holies, none but the Alaka is admitted. Behind its veil the sacrament is consecrated, the communion vessels are deposited, and the tremendous mysteries of the *tábot*, or ark of the covenant, are shrouded from the eyes of the uninitiated. The gold of the foreigner has penetrated the secret of the contents of this box, which are nothing more than a scroll of parchment, on which is inscribed the name of the patron saint of the church; but the priest who dared to open his lips on the subject to one of his own countrymen would incur the heavy penalties due to the sacrilege.

The most ridiculous exploits are recorded of Menilek the son of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, who crowned a long course of iniquity by plundering the Temple of Jerusalem. The true ark of Zion is believed still to exist in the church at Axum; but prayers, vows, and oblations, are equally made to the handicraft of any vain eccle-

siastic, which may be held up to the admiring multitude as having been secreted in a cave during the inroad of the conquering Graan, and since revealed by a miraculous dream from Heaven.

In the presence of the mysterious casket consists the only sanctity of the church. Heretics alone doubt of its inherent virtues; and every individual who professes Christianity must during life make his vows and oblations to the one he has selected, in order that after death he may enjoy the privilege of interment under its sacred influence. Young and old, rich and poor, prostrate themselves to the ground as the idol is carried in procession through the streets under the great umbrellas; and when replaced in its case in the holy of holies, the air is rent by the attendant priests with shouts of "The temple of the eternal God!"

All the disqualifications of the Levitical law oppose entrance to the sacred edifice, and both the threshold and the door-posts must be kissed in passing. Like the Jews, the Abyssinians invariably commence the service with the Trisagion, "Holy, holy, holy, is God, the Lord of Sabaoth." The sweet singer of Israel danced before the Lord, and a caricature imitation remains, the chief point of Abyssinian worship. Capering and beating the ground with their feet, the priests stretch out their crutches towards each other with frantic gesticulations, whilst the clash of the timbrel, the sound of the drum, and the howling of harsh voices, complete a most strange

form of devotion. The lessons are taken partly from the Scriptures, partly from the miracles of the holy Virgin and of Tekla Haïmanót, the life of Saint George, and other foolish and fabulous works; but all are in the ancient Æthiopic tongue, which to the congregation is a dead letter; and the sole edification of a visit to the church is therefore comprised in the kiss that has been imprinted on the portal.

In order to obtain the desired and enviable position of eating the bread of comparative idleness, a sacrifice is indispensable. The priest is restricted to the possession of a single wife; and on her demise or infidelity, no second marriage is authorized. A small portion of lore must, moreover, be imbibed —the Psalms of David must be carefully conned— and the mysteries of Abyssinian song and dance be fully penetrated, before the sacred office can be attained. The lessons of early youth are, however, speedily forgotten, and the constant repetition of the same words removes the necessity of retaining the character. Few in after years can read—still fewer respect the vow of chastity—and the employment of the morning hours of the Sabbath, and of the holydays, in dancing and shouting within the walls of the church, entitle the performer to all the immunities and comforts pertaining unto holy orders.

In every clerical conclave the king possesses the supreme voice of authority; and the despotic mo-

narch may in Shoa be justly regarded as the head of his own church. Loss of office is the great punishment inflicted by the spiritual court, which is composed of the assembled members of the individual church, and degradation is followed by the expulsion of the offending brother from the community. But the great hall of justice is not unfrequently graced with the presence of the refractory priest; and fetters in the dungeon, or banishment from the realm, maintain a wholesome fear of the royal power of investigation in matters ecclesiastical.

The monk is admitted to the order of his choice by any officiating priest. A prayer is repeated, the skull-cap blessed with the sign of the cross, and the ceremony is complete. But a more imposing rite attends the oath of celibacy before the Abuna. The clergy assemble in numbers, and fires are lighted around the person of the candidate. His loins are bound about with the leathern girdle of Saint John, and the prayer and the requiem for the dead rise pealing from the circle. The *Glaswa*—a narrow strip of black cloth adorned with coloured crosses—is then placed on the shaven crown, and shrouded from view by the enveloping shawl; and the archbishop, clad in his robes of state, having repeated the concluding prayer and blessing, signs with his own hand the emblem of faith over the various parts of the body.

Education was in former days to be obtained

alone from the inmate of the monastic abode, and a life of scanty food, austerity, and severe fasting, was embraced only by the more enthusiastic. But the skin-cloak, and the dirty head-dress, now envelope the listless monk, who, satisfied with a dreamy and indolent existence, basks during the day on the grassy banks of the sparkling rivulet, and prefers a bare sufficiency of coarse fare from the hand of royal charity, to the sweeter morsel earned by the sweat of his brow.

Priest-ridden and bigoted to the last degree, the chains of bondage are firmly riveted around the neck of the infatuated Abyssinian. The most ridiculous doctrines must be believed, and the most severe fasts and penances must be endured, according to the pleasure and the fiat of the church. Uncharitable and uncompromising, her anger often blazes forth into the furious blast of excommunication; and for offences the most trivial, the souls of men are consigned to eternal perdition.

Fasts, penances, and excommunication form, in fact, the chief props of the clerical power; but the repentant sinner can always purchase a substitute to undergo the two former, and the ban of the church is readily averted by a timely offering. Spiritual offences are indeed of rare occurrence; for murder and sacrilege alone give umbrage to the easy conscience of the native of Shoa, and all other crimes written in the book of Christian commandment have been well nigh effaced from his

tablet. Abstinence and the disbursement of suitable largesses to the priest and mendicant, are of themselves quite sufficient to ensure the requisite absolution for every sin committed in the flesh.

The death-bed and the funeral feast are attended with much advantage to the temporal interests of the church. The choicest food is unsparingly dealt out, and the bereaved widow is glad to leave the management of her affairs to the assiduous father confessor, who is entertained in the house of all who can afford the expense. The dying man bestows a portion of his estate in this world for the bright hopes which absolution extends in that which is to come; and the holy sacrament is even administered after the soul has quitted the tenement of clay, in order that the superstition of grateful relatives may grant a rich reward for the blessing of the priest, and for his undeniable assurance of exemption from punishment hereafter.

But the Abyssinian possesses no idea of the more salutary doctrine of Christianity. Polluted faith is here reflected in the mirror of depraved manners, and long severe fastings constitute the essence of his degenerate religion. The idol worship of saints has made rapid progress in the land, and the ignorance of the clergy is only to be equalled by the impurity of the lay classes. Their belief in Christianity, if that term can be applied, is strange, childish, and inconsistent; and bigoted to the faith

of their ancestors, they abhor and despise all who refuse acquiescence in this their absurd confession :—

"That the Alexandrian faith is the only true belief.

"That faith, together with baptism, is sufficient for justification; but that God demands alms and fasting, as amends for sin committed prior to the performance of the baptismal rite.

"That unchristened children are not saved.

"That the baptism of water is the true regeneration.

"That invocation ought to be made to the saints, because sinning mortals are unworthy to appear in the presence of God, and because if the saints be well loved, they will listen to all prayer.

"That every sin is forgiven from the moment that the kiss of the pilgrim is imprinted on the stones of Jerusalem; and that kissing the hand of a priest purifies the body in like manner.

"That sins must be confessed to the priest—saints invoked—and full faith reposed in charms and amulets, more especially if written in an unknown tongue.

"That prayers for the dead are necessary, and absolution indispensable; but that the souls of the departed do not immediately enter upon a state of happiness, the period being in exact accordance with the alms and prayers that are expended upon earth."

All ideas regarding salvation are thus vague and indefinite; and vain, foolish doctrines have taken entire possession of the shallow thoughts of the Christian of Æthiopia. Born amid falsehood and deceit, cradled in bloodshed, and nursed in the arms of idleness and debauchery, the national character is truly painted in the confession of one of her degenerate sons:—"Whensoever we behold the pleasing ware, we desire to steal it; and we are never in the company of a man whom we dislike, that we do not wish to kill him on the spot."

The uphill task of the missionary is therefore hard, and the wonder is that so much has been accomplished—not that the harvest is scanty. The example of a holy life cannot fail to produce a beneficial effect, and the preacher of the Gospel is acknowledged to possess every quality that is good, mild, and just; but disliked as a stranger of envied accomplishment, despised as an alien to the land, and hated by the jealous priesthood, the words of truth fall unheeded from lips the most eloquent, and the best directed endeavours prove of small avail. Perfectly satisfied with his own creed, the Abyssinian finds it easier to kiss the holy book than to peruse its contents, and to trust to the fast and the priestly absolution than to mould his conduct according to the Gospel; and it is not until commerce with the arts of civilized society shall have been introduced, that the barrier

can be overcome, or one step be gained towards the restoration to the unhappy country of the true word of God. The bigotry of ages is confirmed by the self-pride and the excessive ignorance of the present race; and on the rising or on the unborn generation must rest the sole hope for a moral resurrection.

CHAPTER XVII.

ABYSSINIAN RITES AND PRACTICES WHICH WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN BORROWED FROM THE HEBREWS.

The appellation of *Hábeshi,* "a mixed and mingling people," is aptly exemplified in this strange medley of religion, to which the Jew, the Moslem, and the Pagan, has each contributed. A mixture from different nations, as stigmatized by the original term, the Abyssinians have garbled the faith of all their ancestors; and there is assuredly no Christian community in the whole world which has jumbled together truth and falsehood with such utter inconsistency as the vain church of Æthiopia.

Many circumstances have conspired to render the nation more peculiarly susceptible of Hebrew influence. The first Christian missionary found the people idolaters, and worshippers of the great serpent Arwé; but the ancestors of those Jews who to the present day exist in the country, unquestionably arrived long before the nation had embraced the Christian religion; and in their attempts to obtain a moral influence over their pagan hosts were far from being inactive in their adopted home. Thus the early Christian church, that of Egypt

especially, by which many Hebrew customs had been embraced, was the more readily received when introduced into a nation amongst whom similar doctrines and practices were already in use.

Boasting a direct descent from the house of Solomon, and flattering themselves in the name of the wisest man of antiquity, the emperors of Abyssinia preserve the high-sounding title of "King of Israel," and the national standard displays for their motto—"The Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed." The tradition of queen Maqueda has been ascribed to the invention of those fugitive Jews, who, after the destruction of Jerusalem by the Emperor Titus, migrated into the northern states by way of the Red Sea—who disseminated it with the design of obtaining the desired permission to settle in the country, and whose descendants are the Falashas still extant among the mountains of Simien and Lasta. But whatever may be thought by others of the legend of descent, the firm national belief in the origin traced, will in a great measure account for the general inclination and consent to receive Hebrew rites and practices as they were from time to time presented. Jews as well as Christians believe the forty-fifth psalm to be a prophecy of the queen's visit to Jerusalem, whither she was attended by a daughter of Hiram the king of Tyre—the latter portion being a prediction of the birth of Menilek, who was to be king over a nation of Gentiles.

Whatever the true date of their arrival, it is certain that the Hebrews have exercised a great influence upon the affairs of Abyssinia since the days of their dispersion; and although their religion was abjured by the nation on the promulgation of the Gospel, the children of Israel, moulding a portion of their worship on the formulæ of the Christian faith, and esteemed as sorcerers and cunning artists in the land, found a safe asylum among the mountains, and exist to the present day, here as elsewhere, a separate and peculiar nation.

With the destruction of the race of Solomon, the Jewish party for a time obtained the preponderance. Again, on the restoration of the legitimate dynasty, they were hunted among the mountains as a race accursed, and the feeling reigned paramount to sweep the wanderers from the face of the land. But the custom of ages had impressed the Hebrew practices too deeply to be removed. They were, in fact, regarded in the light of orthodox Christian doctrines; and, as might have been expected from a bigoted and superstitious people, the severest persecutions were enforced against the members of another creed, without the nation observing in how far they were themselves tainted with those very principles which in others they considered so justifiable to oppress.

The Abyssinian Christian will neither eat with the Jew, nor with the Galla, nor with the Mohammadan, lest he should thereby participate in the

delusions of his creed. The church and the churchyard are equally closed against all who commit this deadly sin, and the Æthiopian is bound by the same restrictions which prohibited the Jews from partaking of the flesh of certain animals. The act which is deemed disgraceful in the eyes of men, is regarded as a moral transgression, and is visited, as was the case in the Mosaic institution, by the stern reprimand of the priest. The penance of severe fasting, or of uneasy repose upon the bare ground, is enforced by the father confessor to efface the taint of the interdicted animal; and prayers must be repeated, and holy water plentifully besprinkled over the defiled person of that sinning individual who shall have dared to touch the meat of the hare, or the swine, or the aquatic fowl.

"The children of Israel did not eat of the sinew which shrank, which is upon the hollow of the thigh." This in the Amháric language is termed *Shoolada*, and it is held unlawful to be eaten in Shoa, more especially to the members of the royal blood; a universal belief prevailing, that the touch of the unholy morsel would infallibly be followed by the loss of the offending teeth, as a direct proof of the just indignation of Heaven.

The Jewish Sabbath is strictly observed throughout the kingdom. The ox and the ass are at rest. Agricultural pursuits are suspended. Household avocations must be laid aside, and the spirit of idleness reigns throughout the day.

By order of the great council of Laodicea, the Oriental churches were freed from this burden; and the industrious gladly availed themselves of the ecclesiastical license to work on the Saturday. Here, however, the ancient usage agreed too well with a people systematically indolent; and when, a few years ago, one daring spirit presumed, in advance of the age, to burst the fetters of superstition, His Majesty the king of Shoa, stimulated by the advice of besotted monks, issued a proclamation, that whoso violated the Jewish Sabbath should forfeit his property to the royal treasury, and be consigned to the state dungeon.

Ludolf, the celebrated Strabo of Æthiopia, most accurately remarks, that there is no nation upon earth which fasts so strictly as the Abyssinians; and that they would rather commit a great crime than touch food on the day of abstinence. They not only boast with the Pharisee, "I fast twice a week," but pride themselves also upon their mortification of the flesh during half the year, whilst the haughty and self-sufficient monk vaunts his meagre diet as the only means of expiation from sin and evil desire.

The Abyssinians, in common with other Christian communities who rigidly observe the fasts of Wednesday and Friday, advance as an argument, that the Jews seized our Saviour on the first of those days, and on the second carried into execution their design of crucifixion; but as this account differs from

the evidence of the Gospel, which shows that the arrest took place upon the Thursday, the observance is most probably an imitation of the weekly fasts in existence among the Jews.

The fast of the forty days before Easter is observed with much greater rigour than any other in Abyssinia; and the reckless individual who shall neglect the great "Toma Hodádi" cannot possess one sentiment of true religion in his heart. To the abstinence of this season especially are attached peculiar virtues which completely nullify the effect of every sin that may be committed throughout the residue of the year.

According to the Jewish practice, all culinary utensils must be thoroughly cleansed and polished, to the end that no particle of meat or prohibited food may remain to pollute the pious intention. Journeys and travel are strictly interdicted; and from the Thursday until Easter morn no morsel should enter the lip, and the parched throat ought to remain without moisture.

During the fast of the holy Virgin, children of tender years are not even exempted from the penance of sixteen days; and during the many and weary weeks of abstinence which roll slowly throughout the entire year, the Abyssinian priest would grant no dispensation to the famished mortal, "were he even to receive an immediate mandate from heaven."

Sáhela Selássie arose some years ago a mighty zealot in the cause; and perceiving that the custom

was beginning to decline, proclaimed through the royal herald pains and penalties sufficiently severe to insure the future strict observance of the fast. The commands of the defender of the faith were, however, in one instance, transgressed by a soldier, during a military expedition; but his excuse of fatigue under a heavy load of the king's camp equipage was admitted; and although on similar occasions a certain license is extended, still the monarch keeps a strict watch over the maintenance of church discipline.

On the annual day of atonement, the Jews were obliged to confess their sins before a priest. In like manner the Abyssinians are commanded from time to time to perform the ceremony, during the great fast of Hodádi more particularly, and on Good Friday, the day of the Jewish expiation. And as the slave, in token of his freedom and dismissal, received the blow from the Roman prætor, so the penitent on absolution receives a stroke over the shoulders from a branch of the Woira tree, as a sign of his deliverance from sin and Satan.

Like the Pagans of ancient and modern times, who placed between the most high God and themselves an inferior deity, the Abyssinians observe this species of idolatry, although the names of their tutelar spirits have been changed. Saint Michael and the holy Virgin are here venerated as in no other country in the world—the former as the martial leader of all the choirs of angels—the latter as

chief of all saints, and queen of heaven and of earth; and both are considered as the great intercessors for mankind.

The detrimental influence of this superstition is fully exemplified in the conduct of the nation. The mediator is ever employed when individual courage fails in impudent assurance or insatiable beggary. Time is uselessly wasted in importunity, which all believe must in the end prove successful; and the practice of invocation and intercession thus exerts the most baneful tendency even upon the daily dealings of life.

Like the Jews of old, the Abyssinians weep and lament on all occasions of death, and the shriek ascends to the sky, as if the soul could be again recalled from the world of spirits. The Israelites employed hired mourners; but here the friends and relatives of the departed assemble for the same purpose, and the absence of any from the scene is ascribed to want of love and affection. As with the Jews, the most inferior garments are put on; and the skin is torn from the temples, and scarified on the cheeks and breast, to proclaim the last extremity of grief.

In later days, the extravagance of mourning has been somewhat moderated, through the agency of a priest of the church of St. George, who stood boldly forward to arrest a practice equally at variance with the sacred books of the country, and with the spirit of the New Testament. Excommunication was thun-

dered upon all who should thenceforth indulge publicly in the luxury of woe; and the people trembled under the ban of the church. The death of a great governor soon confirmed the restriction. Being loved and esteemed by all classes, the prohibition was severely felt. The complaint was referred to the throne; and as the deceased was a man of rank, and a royal favourite withal, the clergy were commanded to grant absolution in this one instance. But Zeddoo, the stout-hearted priest, arose, and declared that he had no respect for persons, and that the words of truth must be defended to the death. The silence of the monarch enforced the ecclesiastical fiat; and to this day the drum is mute at the funeral wake, and the customary praise of the defunct is heard no more in the public resorts of the capital.

The Talmud asserts that those who died piously remained in a state of active knowledge of all the occurrences of this world. Philo, the learned Jew of Alexandria, informs us, that the souls of the patriarchs pray incessantly for the Jewish nation, and the erudite rabbins alleged that angels are the governors of all sublunary things, and that each man and every country has a guardian angel for protection and direction. The Abyssinians carry this belief still further—they confidently anticipate the intercession and assistance of saints and angels in all spiritual and secular concerns, and invoke and adore them in even a higher degree than the Creator. All their churches are dedicated to one in particular, and the

holy "tábot" is regarded as the visible representative of the celestial patron. The ark of St. Michael accompanies all military expeditions, to insure success against the Gentiles; and that of Tekla Haïmanót stands the palladium of the north, to preserve the empire from the attacks of the Mohammadan prince of Argóbba.

All the absurd ideas of the Jewish rabbins regarding the dead have been received and embraced by the fathers of Abyssinia. They maintain with the Romanists too, that the soul of the departed does not immediately enter into the kingdom of joy, but is conducted to an habitation situated in an invisible spot between the heaven and the earth, where it remains until the resurrection, in a state of happiness or torment, according to the alms and prayers bestowed by surviving relatives and friends. This Abyssinian "limbo" is supposed also to be occupied by the saints; and the absurdity is increased by the belief that intercession with the Almighty is absolutely necessary to absolve the Heavenly host from their spiritual imperfections, and insure their resting in peace until the coming of Christ.

But the interest of the avaricious priest is concerned in the preservation of this doctrine, and a corner of the church-yard is sternly denied to all who die without death-bed confession, or whose relations refuse the fee and the funeral feast. The payment of eight pieces of salt, however, wafts the soul of a poor man to a place of rest, and the *téscar*,

or banquet for the dead, places him in a degree of happiness according to the costliness of the entertainment. The price of eternal bliss is necessarily higher to the rich; whilst royalty is taxed at a still more costly rate, and the anniversaries of the deaths of the six kings of Shoa are held with great ceremony in the capital. Once during every twelve months, before the commencement of a splendid feast, their souls are fully absolved from all sin; and the munificence of their illustrious descendant is still further displayed in the long line of beeves which afterwards wends its way to the threshold of every church in Ankóber.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE PEOPLE.

ÆTHIOPS, one of the twelve descendants of Cush, the son of Ham, said to have been begotten and buried at Axum, is regarded by the Abyssinians as their great progenitor. Shortly after the Flood, the grandson of Noah is believed to have advanced from the low country, then under the dominion of the sea and the marsh, until, after crossing a tract little fitted for the occupation of the shepherd, he ascended the highlands of Æthiopia, which afforded an inviting habitation to the parent stock, from which have emanated the different shoots of African population.

Like most other Abyssinian legends, this version is somewhat at variance with received history, which assigns to Arabia the original seat of the Cushites. The strange medley of colour and feature observable at the present day, does not, however, overturn the theory of origin. The habits of the people and the peculiarly varied climate of their country, together with the usual result of mingling intercourse with the fairer and more beautiful among the various hordes of slaves which have for

ages streamed through the land from the ravaged interior, are in themselves fully sufficient to account for the diversity.

The connection with Arabia, commencing at a period the most remote, is known to have existed for many centuries. Armies from both nations respectively visited each other in wrath—merchants reciprocally sustained the intercourse. Later still, the family of the false Prophet found an asylum among the mountains of a country which, as a Christian state that was not overwhelmed by the resistless flood of Islamism, stands alone in the history of Eastern nations; and to the present day many peculiarities in the language, the laws, and the customs of both, continue to mark a common origin. Existing usages would also tend to confirm what was asserted in the days of Diodorus, that Egypt was originally colonized from Æthiopia, the very soil being brought down from the highlands by the floods of the Nile.

Caucasian features predominate amongst the Amhára, notwithstanding that the complexion passes through every shade, from an olive brown to the jet black of the Negro. An approximation to the thick lip and flattened nose is not unfrequently to be seen; but the length and silkiness of the hair invariably marks the wide difference that exists between the two races. The men are tall, robust, and well formed; and the women, although symmetrically made, are scarcely less masculine. They

are rarely beautiful, and their attempts are indeed ingenious to render hideous the broad unmeaning expanse of countenance bestowed upon them by nature.

All savages esteem certain deformities to be perfection, and strive, by augmenting the wildness of their aspect, to enhance the beauty of their persons. Having first eradicated the eyebrows, the Amhára damsel paints a deep narrow curved line in their room with a strong permanent blue dye; thus imparting a look of vacancy and foolishness, which in the high-born dame is heightened by plastering the cheeks to the very eyes with a pigment of red ochre and fat. If not close shaven and encircled by a narrow greasy fillet of rag, the head is adorned with many minute rows of elaborate curls, which diverge from a common centre, and are besmeared with stale butter until the wig has assumed the appearance of an ordinary English beehive.

The costume consists of a wide sack chemise with full sleeves, confined round the waist by a narrow girdle, and surmounted by a long winding sheet thrown over the head, and descending to the heels —very coarse and strong, and, like Ruth's veil, fully capable of containing six measures of wheat. Large black wooden studs in the lobe of the ear are on high days and holydays replaced by masses of silver or pewter, resembling a pile of hand-grenades, or the teething rattles employed in nurseries. Bracelets and anklets of the same metals,

which, from their clumsiness, are aptly denominated "fetters," are worn by those who can afford such extravagance. Blue and gold-coloured beads are ingeniously wrought into a necklace by the wealthier, who never appear without a bandoleer of potent amulets, terminating in a huge bell-rope tassel; and the lady of rank completes her toilet by dyeing her hands and feet red with the bulb called *ensosela*, securely plugging up the nostrils with lemon-peel or some aromatic herb, so that the end of the bouquet may dangle before the mouth.

From the king to the peasant the costume of the men consists of a large loose web of coarse cotton-cloth, enveloping the entire person in graceful folds, but well-nigh incapacitating the wearer from exertion. Frequently disarranged, and falling ever and anon upon the ground, the troublesome garment must be constantly tucked up and folded anew about the shoulders, from which it is removed in deference to every passing superior. A cotton waistcloth of many yards in length is swathed about the loins, and a pair of very wide loose trousers, termed *senáphil*, hang barely to the knee.

The sword, the spear, and the buckler, are the national weapons, and the first is girded to the loins of every male subject in the kingdom, be his profession what it may. Barely two feet in length, and highly curved, it rather resembles a sickle than an implement of war. It serves equally at the banquet and in the field; but being firmly lashed

to the right side, protrudes most incommodiously behind, and is not to be detached from the scabbard unless by much grunting and personal exertion. The serf still appears in the raw fleece of the sheep, which he shifts according to the vicissitudes of the weather,

> "With the unfashion'd fur
> Rough-clad, devoid of every finer art,
> And elegance of life;"

but during the journey or the foray, a cloak, composed of the prepared skin of the lion, the leopard, or the ocelot, is thrown over the shoulder of the better classes. Neither shoes nor sandals are ever employed. The despot and the wandering mendicant are alike bare-footed, and, unless by the clergy or the inmate of the monastery, no covering is worn over the head. A wooden skewer, displaying either a feather or a sprig of wild asparagus, is stuck in the hair of two-thirds of the nation, and the arm of every man of any note is encumbered either with an infinity of copper rings forming a gauntlet, with ponderous ivory armlets, or with a mass of silver which might serve as a shackle to a wild colt.

In the absence of a razor, the men scrupulously denude their cheeks and chin with a pair of very indifferent scissors—a mode of proceeding which serves greatly to enhance the dirty appearance of their unwashed faces. Water, not less than coffee and tobacco, being studiously avoided, as savouring

too strongly of abhorred Islamism, the Christian contents himself with rubbing his eyes in the morning with the dry corner of his discoloured robe; but the greatest attention is paid to the management of the hair with which nature has so liberally supplied him, and many hours are daily expended in arranging the mop into various and quaint devices. At one time worn hanging in long clustering ringlets over the cheeks and neck—at another, frizzed into round matted protuberances; to-day fancifully tricked and trimmed into small rows of minute curls like a counsellor's peruke, and to-morrow boldly divided into four large lotus-leaved compartments.

During the period of mourning, which extends to one year, black or yellow garments, or the ordinary apparel steeped in mire, must be worn; and on the demise of a relative or friend, both sexes scarify the cheeks by tearing from below each temple a circular piece of skin about the size of a sixpence; to accomplish which, the nail of the little finger is purposely suffered to grow like an eagle's talon. An ecclesiastical remonstrance to the throne, representing this practice to be in direct violation of the written law, "Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead," long since obtained the promulgation of a royal edict directing its discontinuance; but it is still universally practised, and throughout the kingdom there is scarcely an individual to be seen, whether male or female, who

has not at some period of life been thus horribly disfigured.

The *mátteb*, a small encircling cord of deep blue silk, chosen in reference to the smiling sky above, is the badge of debased Christianity throughout the land, and those who accidentally appear in public without it are severely censured by their pastors. Like other Eastern nations, the Amhára have no family name. They soon ripen and grow old. Girls become mothers at the early age of twelve, and are decayed before the summer of life has well commenced.

It has been conjectured by Pliny, that the Orientals received their first hints in architecture from the swallow, and that, in imitation of the abode of the feathered instructor, their primeval essays were made in clay. Whence the Abyssinians obtained their ideas on the subject it were difficult to tell, but it is certain that they have made little progress whether in execution or in design. Their houses, constructed as in the earliest days, are still a mere framework of stakes sparingly bedaubed with a rude coating of mud. Here thieves can readily break through and steal; and of such a flimsy nature are the materials employed, that the morning sun often rises a witness to the truth of the scriptural metaphor, "He built his house upon the sand, and it was swept away by the rising flood."

The windows, when any windows there be, are mere perforations in the wall, furnished with clumsy

shutters, but unprovided with any transparent substance; and thus, if the ponderous door is closed against the searching fog, or the cutting wintry blast, all possibility of admitting light is precluded; whilst, excepting through the crevices in the plank, and the apertures of the cracked walls, there exists no exit for the smoke of the sunken wood fire, which thus fills the solitary apartment, blackens the low roof, and occasions frequent attacks of ophthalmia. Throughout, the most slovenly appearance pervades the dreary interior. Furniture is limited to a small wicker table, a bullock's hide, and a rickety bedstead abounding in vermin; and whilst the universal objection to the use of water, whether as regards the person or the apparel of the inmates, enhances the gloomy vista of cobweb desolation, dirt and filth choke up the surrounding enclosure.

The absence of drains or sewers compels the population of the towns and villages to live in the miasma of decomposing matter and stagnant water. The comfort of space is never consulted—stables and outhouses are far beyond the notions of the proprietor; and in the absence of all tidiness or comfort in the arrangement of the yards, the unseemly dunghill, which in other countries is carried away to improve the soil, is here suffered to accumulate and rot before the entrance. Poisoning the atmosphere with its baneful exhalations, it is periodically swept away by the descending torrents to feed the rank weeds which fatten in the mire; but

no attempt is to be seen at the small trim garden, or neat rustic porch, even in the lone farm-steadings which are scattered throughout the country. All alike present a dreary look of desertion. The poultry, and the mules, and the farm-stock, and the inhabitants, all reside under the same roof. Bare walls and slovenly thatch rise from a straggling wattle stockade, which environs the premises to preserve the inmates from the nocturnal attacks of the prowling hyena, and to impart the fullest idea of confinement and misery. Few trees break the monotony of the scene. No busy hum of glad labour is to be heard—no bustle or noise among the elders—no merry game or amusement among the children; and thus to the European visiter the whole appears strange, savage, and unnatural.

With doors allowing free ingress to every injurious current, with roofs admitting the tropical rain, and sunken floors covered with unwholesome damp, it is only surprising that many more of the people of Shoa are not martyrs to disease. It is now nine years since an epidemic called *ougáret* made its appearance at the capital, and, as might have been anticipated, spread with fearful virulence in the foul city. The iron drum of misfortune was heard by the credulous pealing over the land; and although a black bull was led through the streets, followed by the inhabitants carrying stones upon their heads in token of repentance, and the sacrifice of atonement was duly performed, one half of the

whole population were speedily swept away. The monarch sought strict seclusion in the remote palace at Machal-wans, where he would see no person until the plague was stayed; and those who survived of his terror-stricken subjects fled for a season from a hill which was declared by the superstitious priesthood to have been blasted by a curse from heaven.

CHAPTER XIX.

SOCIAL AND MORAL CONDITION.

In Shoa a girl is reckoned according to the value of her property; and the heiress to a house, a field, and a bedstead, is certain to add a husband to her list before many summers have shone over her head. Marriage is generally concluded by the parties declaring, before witnesses, "upon the life of the king," that they intend to live happily together, and the property of each being produced, is carefully appraised. A mule or an ass, a dollar, a shield, and a sheaf of spears on the one side, are noted against the lady's stock of wheat, cotton, and household gear; and the bargain being struck, the effects become joint for the time, until some domestic difference results in both taking up their own, and departing to seek a new mate.

Matrimony is, however, occasionally solemnized by the church, in a manner somewhat similar to the observance of more civilized lands; the contracting parties swearing to take each other for life, in wealth or in poverty, in sickness or in health; and afterwards ratifying the ceremony by partaking together of the holy sacrament, and by an oath on the despot's life. But this fast binding

is not relished by the inhabitants of Shoa, and it is of very rare occurrence. Favourite slaves and concubines are respected as much as wedded wives. No distinction is made betwixt legitimate and illegitimate children; and, to the extent of his means, every subject follows the example set by the monarch, who, it has been seen, entertains upon his establishment, in addition to his lawful spouse, no fewer than five hundred concubines.

The king resides only for a few weeks at either of his many palaces; and whenever he proceeds to another, is accompanied by all his chief officers, courtiers, and domestics. At each new station a new female establishment is invariably entertained. All conjugal affection is lost sight of, and each woman is in turn cast aside in neglect. Few married couples ever live long together without violating their vow; and the dereliction being held of small account, a beating is the only punishment inflicted upon the weaker party. The jewel chastity is here in no repute; and the utmost extent of reparation to be recovered in a court of justice for the most aggravated case of seduction is but fivepence sterling!

Morality is thus at the very lowest ebb; for there is neither custom nor inducement to be chaste, and beads, more precious than fine gold, bear down every barrier of restraint. Honesty and modesty both yield to the force of temptation, and pride is seldom offended at living in a state of indolent

dependence upon others. The soft savage requires but little inducement to follow the bent of her passions according to the dictates of unenlightened nature; and neither scruples of conscience nor the rules of the loose society form any obstacle whatever to their entire gratification.

The bulk of the nation is agricultural; but on pain of forfeiting eight pieces of salt, value twenty-pence sterling, every Christian subject of Shoa is compelled, whenever summoned, to follow his immediate governor to the field. A small bribe in cloth or honey will sometimes obtain leave of absence, but the peasant is usually ready and anxious for the foray; presenting as it does the chance of capturing a slave, or a flock of sheep, of obtaining honour in the eyes of the despot, and of gratifying his inherent thirst for heathen blood.

The principal men of the country who may not be entrusted with government, spend their time in basking in the sun, holding idle gossip with their neighbours, lounging about the purlieus of the court, or gambling at *gébeta* or *shuntridge*[1], the management of the house being left to the women, and the direction of the farm to the servants and slaves. Visits are customarily paid early in the morning; and it is reckoned disreputable to enter

[1] *Gébeta* is a game something allied to backgammon, but played with sixty-four balls, stored in twenty cavities on the board.

Shuntridge is, with few deviations, the Arab game of chess.

a stranger's house after the hour of meals, because the etiquette of the country enforcing the presentation of refreshment, the unseasonable call is ascribed to a desire to obtain it.

Whether in the cabinet or in the field, a great man is constantly surrounded by a numerous band of sycophants, and never for a moment suffered to be by himself. The custom of the country enjoins the practice; the cheapness of provisions favours the support of a large retinue; and through the lack of manufactories, the population is able to supply an unlimited number of idlers, who are willing to pick up a livelihood by any means that chance may present. But to the stranger the nuisance is a crying one. No privacy is to be enjoyed, for no retirement is ever permitted. A dozen naked savages are perpetually by one's side, restrained by no very correct ideas of order or decorum. Each intruder seizes the first object that comes within his reach, and attacks ears, teeth, and nose, with the most reckless indifference to appearance. The confused hum and the half-suppressed chatter are far from affording assistance during the hours of mental employment; and at the season of meals, or during the presence of illustrious visiters, the whole establishment, denuded to the girdle, crowd into the apartment to satisfy their own curiosity, under pretext of doing honour to their lord and master.

On the first introduction of a stranger, an individual is selected from the establishment, and ap-

pointed the *báldoraba*, or "introducer." He is designed to illustrate the agency of the holy Virgin and of the saints, between the Redeemer and the sinning mortal. To him and to him alone can a visiter look for admittance into the house; and unless he be present, the monarch and the great man are alike invisible. Court-yards may be thronged with attendants, and the doors may seem invitingly accessible, but the *open sesame* is wanting, and the repulsed party returns to his home disgusted with the insolence received. Time, however, gradually softens down the rigidity of this most inconvenient practice, which is at first so pertinaciously observed. Suspicion of evil design gives way on matured acquaintance; and after a certain probation, there is not much more difficulty experienced in gaining admittance to an Abyssinian hut, than to the lordly halls of the English nobleman.

Respect is paid by prostration to the earth in a manner the most degrading and humiliating—by bowing the face among the very dust—by removing the robe in order to expose the body—and on entering the house, by kissing the nearest inanimate object. Every subject, of whatever rank, when admitted to the royal presence, throws himself flat before the footstool, and three times brings his forehead in contact with the ground. All stand with shoulders bare to the girdle before His Majesty, or any superior; but to equals the corner of the cloth is removed only for a time. Any thing delivered

to a domestic must be received with both hands in a cringing attitude; and should a present be made, the nearest object, generally the threshold of the door, is invariably saluted with the lips.

Amongst persons of rank, presents are frequently interchanged, and the utmost display is attempted on their delivery. Whenever anything was offered to us by our Amhára hosts, the articles were subdivided into a multiplicity of minute portions, placed in baskets covered with red cloth, consigned to a long train of bearers, and each component part of the gift exposed in turn to our view. Wild bulls and unruly he-goats, half as large as a donkey, were sometimes forcibly dragged into our sitting apartment, to the imminent danger and frequent pollution of all around. My personal inspection and approval was required to cocks and hens, unseemly joints of raw beef, loaves of half-baked dough, pots of rancid butter, sticky jars of honey, or leaky barillés of hydromel, sacks of barley, bundles of forage, and coarse overgrown cabbages; and any deviation from this established rule was certain to be visited with the most dire displeasure.

Meals are taken twice during the day — at noon and after sunset. The doors are first scrupulously barred to exclude the evil eye, and a fire is invariably lighted before the Amhára will venture to appease his hunger—a superstition existing, that without this precaution, devils would enter in the dark, and there would be no blessing on the meat.

Men and women sit down together, and most affectionately pick out from the common dish the choicest bits, which, at arm's length, they thrust into each other's mouth, wiping their fingers on the pancakes which serve as platters, and which are afterwards devoured by the domestics. The appearance of the large owlish black face bending over the low wicker table, to receive into the gaping jaws the proffered morsel of raw beef, which, from its dimensions, requires considerable strength of finger to be forced into the aperture, is sufficiently ludicrous, and brings to mind a nest of sparrows in the garden hedge expanding their toad-like throats to the whistle of the school-boy. Mastication is accompanied by a loud smacking of the lips—an indispensable sign of good breeding, which is said to be neglected by none but mendicants, "who eat as if they were ashamed of it;" and sneezing, which is frequent during the operation, is accompanied by an invocation to the Holy Trinity, when every by-stander is expected to exclaim, *Mároo!* "God bless you!"

Raw flesh forms the grand aliment of life. It is not unfrequently seasoned with the gall of the slaughtered animal; but a sovereign contempt is entertained towards all who have recourse to a culinary process. The bull is thrown down at the very door of the eating-house; the head having been turned to the eastward, is, with the crooked sword, nearly severed from the body, under an

invocation to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and no sooner is the breath out of the carcass, than the raw and quivering flesh is handed to the banquet. It is not fair to brand a nation with a foul stigma, resting on a solitary fact; but from my own experience I can readily believe all that is related by the great traveller Bruce of the cruelties practised in Northern Abyssinia.

Sour bread, made from teff, barley, and wheat, is eaten with a stimulating pottage of onions, red pepper, and salt. *Dábo*, the most superior description of bread manufactured, is restricted to the wealthier classes; but there are numerous other methods employed in the preparation of grain, descending through all the grades of *hebest*, *anbabéro*, *unabroot*, *deffo*, *amasa*, *debenia*, *demookta*, and *kitta*, the first four being composed of wheaten flour, and the remainder of teff, gram, juwarree, barley, and peas.

Mead formed the beverage of the northern nations, and was celebrated in song by all their bards. It was the nectar they expected to quaff in heaven from the skulls of their enemies, and upon earth it was liberally patronized. In Shoa the despot alone retains the right of preparing the much-prized luxury, which, under the title of *tedj*, is esteemed far too choice for the lip of the plebeian. Unless brewed with the greatest care, it possesses a sweet mawkish flavour, particularly disagreeable to the palate of the foreigner; but its powers of intoxication,

which do not appear to be attended with the after-feelings inseparable from the use of other potent liquors, extend an irresistible attraction to the Amhára of rank, who will never, if the means of inebriation be placed within his reach, proceed sober to bed.

The branches of the *gesho* plant are dried, pulverized, and boiled with water, until a strong bitter decoction is produced, which is poured off and left to cool. Honey and water being added, fermentation takes place on the third day. Chilies and pepper are next thrown in, and the mixture is consigned to an earthen vessel, closely sealed with mud and cow-dung. The strength increases with the age; and the monarch's cellars are well stored with jars filled thirty years ago, which, little inferior in potency to old Cognac, furnish the material for the nightly orgies in the palace.

The *tullah*, or beer of the country, also possesses intoxicating properties, and if swallowed to the requisite extent, produces the consummation desired. Barley or juwarree, having been buried until the grain begins to sprout, is bruised, and added to the bitter decoction of the *gesho*. Fermentation ensues on the fourth day, when the liquor is closed in an earthen vessel, and according to the temperature of the hut, becomes ready for use in ten or fifteen more. The capacity of the Abyssinian for this sour beverage, which in aspect resembles soap and water, is truly amazing. In every house gallons are each

evening consumed, and serious rioting, if not bloodshed, is too often the result of the festivity.

Rising with the liquor quaffed, the fiercer passions gradually gain the entire ascendency, and guests seldom return to their homes without witnessing the broil and the scuffle, the flashing of swords and the dealing of deep cuts and wounds among the drunken combatants. If but a small portion of the grease which is so plentifully besmeared over the Christian persons of the Amhára were employed in the fabrication of candles, the long idle evenings might be passed in a more pleasant and profitable manner than in the swilling of beer like hogs, and the consequent brawling contentions which at present stigmatize their nocturnal meetings.

On ordinary occasions, however, when not engaged in a debauch, the Abyssinian retires to his bed as soon as the shades of night close in. A bullock's hide is stretched upon the mud floor, on which, for mutual warmth, all the inferior members of the family lie huddled together *in puris naturalibus*. The clothing of the day forming the covering at night, is equitably distributed over the whole party; and should the master of the house require sustenance during the nocturnal hours, a collop of raw flesh and a horn of ale are presented by a male or female attendant, who starts without apparel from the group of sleepers, exclaiming *Abiet!* "My lord!" to the well-known summons from the famished *gaita*.

Coffee, although flourishing wild in many parts of the kingdom, is at all times strictly forbidden on pain of exclusion from the church; and the priesthood have extended the same penal interdiction to smoking, "because the Apostle saith, that which cometh out of the mouth of a man defileth him." One half the year, too, which is reserved for utter idleness, is marked by an exclusion of all meat diet, under the penalty of excommunication. Eggs and butter are then especially forbidden, as also milk, which is styled "the cow's son." Nothing whatever is tasted between sunrise and sunset; and even at the appointed time a scanty mess of boiled wheat, dried peas, or the leaves of the kail-cabbage, with a little vegetable oil, is alone permitted to those who are unable to obtain fish, of which none are found in any of the upland rivers.

Besides Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the twelve months, which are observed as holydays, the fast of the Apostles continues eighteen days, that of the holy Virgin sixteen, Christmas seven, Nineveh four, and Lent fifty-six. During all these, labouring men are strictly prohibited from every employment, and, as they desire their souls to be saved, are compelled to live like anchorites, to the serious diminution of their bodily strength. This is encouraged and promoted by the king; yet there is no system more baneful than that of devoting so many precious days to idleness and vice, and none forming a more fatal obstacle to the

amelioration of the people. Where such a waste of time as this is sanctioned by religion, how deeply laid must be the foundation of mental ignorance! Six months out of the twelve devoted to listless idleness is indeed an immense source of evil, and God, who has placed men here for useful and worthy exertion, is not likely to reward them for their sloth. But throughout Abyssinia the evil is in full force. In arts, in industry, and in social as well as in moral existence, her sons are shrouded under a dense cloud of ignorance. Want of education denies them the relaxation of intellectual employment—little amusement varies the dull routine of a life awed by the church, by the king, and by the nobles; and an unprofitable existence having been passed in this world, the spirit passes away without any very distinct idea being entertained of what is to happen in the next.

CHAPTER XX.

LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.

GEEZ, the ancient Æthiopic, was the vernacular language of the shepherds. Until the fourteenth century of the Christian era it remained that of the Abyssinian empire, and in it are embodied all the annals of her religion. After the downfall of the Zeguean dynasty, and the restoration of the banished descendants of Solomon, Amháric became the court language, to the complete exclusion of the Geez. It prevails in Shoa, as well as in all the provinces included between the Taccázê and the Blue Nile, and is thus spoken by the greater portion of the population of Abyssinia.

The province from which the language has derived its appellation is at the present day in occupation of the Yedjow, and other Mohammadan Galla tribes, who speak a distinct dialect; but the fact of "Amhára" being a term held synonymous with "Christian," would prove that it must formerly have exerted pre-eminent influence in the empire.

Of Semitic origin, and acknowledging the Æthiopic as its parent, the Amháric displays much inter-

change with the surrounding African languages—those, especially, which are spoken by the Danákil, the Somauli, the Galla, the people of Argobba, and those of Hurrur and of Gurágué. The cognate dialect peculiar to Tigré has received much less adulteration from other tongues, and consequently preserves a closer similitude to the Æthiopic; and this circumstance may be traced to the greater intercourse maintained with a variety of foreign nations by the versatile and unstable population in the south.

Amháric excepted, none of the many languages extant in Abyssinia have assumed a written form. The Æthiopic characters, twenty-six in number, are the Coptic adaptation of the Greek alphabet, modelled upon the plan of the Arabic, deranged from their former order, and rendered rude and uncouth by the fingers of barbarous scribes. Each individual consonant, being subjected to variations of figure correspondent with the number of the vowels, produces a prolific kaleidoscope mixture, which might have been deemed sufficient. But the ingenious phonologist who applied these to the Amháric tongue, has superadded seven foreign letters, each undergoing seven transformations by the annexure of as many vowel points; and these, with the addition of a suitable modicum of diphthongs, complete a total of two hundred and fifty-one characters, of the separate denomination of any of which, notwithstanding that most have possessed

names from all antiquity, it may not perhaps be considered extraordinary that the most erudite in the land should profess entire ignorance.

When the Egyptian monarch interdicted the employment of the papyrus, parchment was invented. The Jews very early availed themselves of the *charta pergamena,* whereupon to write their Scriptures. The roll is still used in their synagogues; and being introduced into Abyssinia on the Hebrew emigration, it continues the only material used by the scribe. His ink is a mucilage of gum-arabic mixed with lamp-black. It acquires the consistency of that used in printing, and retains its intense colour for ages. The pen is the reed used in the East, but without any nib, and the inkstand is the sharp end of a cow's horn, which is stuck into the ground as the writer squats to his task.

But it must be confessed that the Abyssinian scribe does not hold the pen of a ready writer; and the dilatory management of his awkward implement is attended with gestures and attitudes the most ludicrous. Under many convulsive twitches of the elbow, the tiny style is carried first to the mouth, and the end having been seized between the teeth, is masticated in a sort of mental frenzy. Throughout the duration of this necessary preliminary, the narrow strip of dirty vellum is held at arm's length, and viewed askance on every side with looks of utter horror and dismay; and when at last the stick descends to dig its furrow upon the surface, no

terrified school-boy, with the birch of the pedagogue hanging over his devoted head, ever took such pains in painting the most elaborate pothook, as does the Abyssinian professor of the art of writing, in daubing his strange hieroglyphics upon the scroll.

As with the Chinaman, each individual character must, on completion, be scrutinized from every possible point of view, before proceeding to the next. Every word must be read aloud by the delighted artist, spelt and re-spelt, and read again; and the greasy skin must be many times inverted, in order that the happy effect may be thoroughly studied. During each interval of approval, the destructive convulsions of the jaw are continued, to the complete demolition of the pencil, and, long before the termination of the opening sentence, European patience has become exhausted at the scene of awkward stupidity, and the gross waste of valuable time which it involves.

Seventeen years have been employed in transcribing a single manuscript, and an ordinary page is the utmost that can be produced by one entire day's steady application. A book is composed of separate leaves enclosed between wooden boards, usually furnished with the fragment of a broken looking-glass for the toilet of the proprietor, and carefully enveloped in a leathern case. The contents being of a sacred nature, and generally in an unknown tongue, they are looked upon with the eye of superstitious credulity, and more especially

venerated if embellished with coloured daubs and an illuminated title-page.

The pictorial art is still far behind the middle ages of Europe; and the appearance of the limner arranging his design with a stick of charcoal, or filling in the gaudy partitions with the chewed point of a reed dabbled in the yolk of an egg, which is placed on end before him, proves sufficiently diverting. The conceits of some of the most celebrated masters also afford a fund of amusement. Christ stilling the tempest is a subject fraught with perplexity to those who have never seen either a maritime vessel or the "great water," and fire-arms are placed somewhat before their invention in the hands of the heroes of antiquity. Our common father in the enjoyment of Paradise is at the present day invariably depicted with an emblazoned buckler, a sprig of asparagus, and a silver sword; and his erring partner appears with a bushy beehive wig most elaborately buttered, and with silver earrings resembling piles of cannon shot. But although doubts exist as to the complexion of the first parents of mankind, the fact is not a little complimentary to the heretic Franks, that the fairest skin is given to saints, angels, and the "dead kings of memory," whereas black or blue are the colours invariably employed in depicting his Satanic majesty.

One hundred and ten volumes[1] comprise the

[1] Vide Appendix.

literature at this day extant in Abyssinia; but tradition records the titles of other works, which it has already been said were deposited for security in the islands of the lake Zooai, at the period of the Mohammadan inroads. Of the accumulated lore of ages, four manuscripts only are written in the language at present spoken and understood; and, with exception of the Holy Scriptures, the whole is little more than a tissue of absurd church controversy and lying monkish legend.

Four monstrous folios, styled Senkesar, which are to be found in every church, briefly record the miracles and lives of the numerous saints and eminent persons who receive adoration in Abyssinia; and on the day ordered by the calendar for the service of each, his biography is read for the edification of all those of the congregation who comprehend the Æthiopic tongue. A host of pious worthies thus preside over every day of the entire year; and fables of the most preposterous kind, detailed with scrupulous minuteness, are vouched for upon unexceptionable authority.

Idle legends form the delight of the people of Shoa. The Æthiopic saint is nothing inferior to his western brethren. He performs yet more marvellous miracles, leads a still more ascetic life, and suffers even more dreadful martyrdom; whence he is proportionably adored in the native land of credulity, superstition, and religious zeal. Between apocryphal and canonical books no distinction is

made. Bel and the Dragon is read with as much devotion as the Acts of the Apostles, and it might be added, with equal edification too ; and St. George vanquishing his green dragon is an object of nearly as great veneration as any of the heroes in the Old Testament.

But the stores of literature being wholly bound up in a dead letter, few excepting the priests and *défteras* can decipher them, and many of these learned men are often more indebted to the memory of their early youth than to the well-thumbed page in their hand. The ignorance of the nation is indeed truly deplorable ; for those children only receive the rudiments of an education who are designed for the service of the church ; and the course of study adopted being little calculated to expand the mind of the neophyte, a peculiar deficiency is presented in intellectual features. The five churches of Ankóber have each their small quota of scholars, but the aggregate does not amount to eighty out of a population of from twelve to fifteen thousand !

Abyssinia, as she now is, presents the most singular compound of vanity, meekness, and ferocity—of devotion, superstition, and ignorance. But, compared with other nations of Africa, she unquestionably holds a high station. She is superior in arts and in agriculture, in laws, religion, and social condition, to all the benighted children of the sun. The small portion of good which does exist

may justly be ascribed to the remains of the wreck of Christianity, which, although stranded on a rocky shore, and buffeted by the storms of ages, is not yet wholly overwhelmed; and from the present degradation of a people avowing its tenets, may be inferred the lesson of the total inefficacy of its forms and profession, if unsupported by enough of mental culture to enable its spirit and its truths to take root in the heart, and bear fruit in the character of the barbarian. There is, perhaps, no portion of the whole continent to which European civilization might be applied with better ultimate results; and although now dwindled into an ordinary kingdom, Hábesh, under proper government and proper influence, might promote the amelioration of all the surrounding people, whilst she resumed her original position as the first of African monarchies.

CHAPTER XXI.

THEOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES.

EVER since the arrival of the British Embassy in Shoa, the king's attention had been occupied with controversies, which, during a period of sixty years, have perplexed the Abyssinian divines. The doctrines which His Majesty conceives to be most conducive to salvation are, unfortunately, diametrically opposed to the historical facts and clear evidence of the Gospel; but as summary deposition and confiscation of property is the sure meed of heresy, he bids fair in due process of time to promulgate a most curious creed of his own.

At the expense of a bloody civil war, Gondar, with Gojam, Damot, and all the south-western provinces of Amhára, have long maintained the three births of Christ—Christ proceeding from the Father from all eternity, styled "the eternal birth;" his incarnation, as being born of the holy Virgin, termed his "second or temporal birth;" and his reception of the Holy Ghost in the womb, denominated his "third birth." The Tigré ecclesiastics, on the other hand, whose side is invariably espoused by the primate of Æthiopia, deny the third birth,

upon the grounds that the reception of the Holy Ghost cannot be so styled—the opinions of both parties being at variance with the belief of the Occidental churches, which, on the evidence of the Gospel, believe that our blessed Saviour received the Holy Ghost at his baptism in his thirtieth year, immediately prior to the commencement of his preaching.

Further, the Gondar sectarians assert that Christ received the Holy Ghost by the Father, whilst those of Tigré affirm that, being God himself, he gave the Holy Ghost unto himself. This creed has obtained for the latter faction the opprobrious epithet of *Kárra Haïmanót*, "the Knife of the Faith," in allusion to their having lopped off an acknowledged scriptural truth.

Asfa Woosen, grandsire to Sáhela Selássie, being assured by his father confessor, a native of Gondar, that in event of his embracing the doctrine of the three births, the district of Morabeitie, already conquered by Emmaha Yasoos, but not at that period completely annexed to Efát, should be permanently secured to him through the spiritual influence of the church, adopted it without hesitation. Until within the last few years the belief was limited to the monarchs of Shoa; but the hospitality of the reigning sovereign attracting to his dominions numerous visiters from the north and west of Abyssinia, the latent flame was quickly fanned; and the dispute reaching a great height,

was at length brought before the despot, who put an end to it by issuing a royal proclamation, under the solitary tree at Angolláia, "That he who should henceforth deny the three births of Christ, should forfeit his property, and be banished the realm."

Aroë, a eunuch from Gondar, shortly disseminated another curious doctrine, which asserts that the human soul possesses knowledge, fasts, and worships in the womb, and immediately on separation from the body renders an account on high. On the recent nomination of the Alaka Wolda Georgis to be head of the Church, and of Kidána Wold to be the Alaka of Debra Libanos, three monks set out to Gondar for the purpose of denouncing them, as being opposed to this creed. Ras Ali, erroneously concluding that they denied the three births, sent to Sáhela Selássie to inquire how it happened that he had seceded from the faith of his forefathers by the appointment of the two individuals in question. Hereat the Negoos waxing wroth, exclaimed, "Am I then the vassal of Ras Ali, that he thus interrogates me?" But reflection showed him the propriety of avoiding a dispute which must have involved serious consequences, and with his usual temporizing policy he sent a reply declaratory "that he had not abjured the belief of his ancestors."

The monks of Debra Libanos having thus failed in their attempt to remove the newly-appointed Alakas, next sought to accomplish their purpose by

the establishment of their creed throughout the kingdom, and gaining numerous proselytes, the disputes had soon reached the climax. After fruitless efforts to satisfy the interests of all concerned, His Majesty sought to escape participation in the quarrel, by referring the parties to Gondar; but Zenama Work, the Queen-dowager, well assured that Ras Ali and the head of the monks would decide against the sect whose doctrines she espoused, denied a passage through Zalla Dingai, and thus compelled the whole to return to Ankóber.

As had been anticipated, this step resulted in the complete triumph of the Gondar eunuch, and the consequent dismissal with disgrace of the Alaka Wolda Georgis, chief of the church of Shoa, the Alakas of St. Michaël, St. George, Aferbeine, Kondie, Arámba, Debra Berhán, and Angollála; of the king's confessor; of Wolda Haïmanót, great Alaka of Mans, chief of thirty-eight churches, styled *Bála Wámber*, "the Master of the Chair," from his possessing the privilege of sitting in the royal presence on an iron stool; and of numerous other priests, whose property was confiscated by the crown, and who received sentence of banishment from the kingdom.

On the herald proclaiming under the palace-gate at the capital that the belief of the knowledge of the human soul in the womb should henceforth be received by all classes, under similar pains and penalties, public thanksgivings were offered in the

victorious churches; and the priests, forming triumphant processions through every street of the town, chanted psalms amid the shrill acclamations of the women, and the din of the sacred drums. The defeated party, on the other hand, complained loudly that they had been dismissed without an impartial hearing; the monarch having simply observed that the fact of their not proceeding to Gondar, as commanded to do, sufficiently proved their error. This they disclaimed, and after requesting to be convinced upon the Scriptures, added, "Will the king adjudge the faith as he adjudges moveables and lands?" But the despot cut the matter short in these words:—"Enough, you are dismissed; and since you will not receive the faith of my forefathers, by their manes, and by the holy Trinity, I swear that you may beg your bread through the land, rather than that one of your creed should be received again into the bosom of the church."

The success of the Debra Libanos sectarians was speedily followed by discussions relative to the equal adoration due to the holy Virgin and her Son, whilst the despotic and ill-advised proceedings of His Majesty raised a storm throughout the entire realm. The ban of excommunication was instantly resorted to—the curse of the church was pronounced upon the triumphant party—the priests who passed it, after having been seized and compelled to accord absolution, were expelled the king-

dom—and a brave and courageous leader seemed alone wanting, to induce those who had been defeated to raise the standard of revolt once more in a religious war.

CHAPTER XXII.

CHRISTMAS FESTIVITIES.

Abyssinia had for fifteen years been left without an archbishop, when Abba Salama, a Coptic youth, nominated by the hundred and ninth occupant of the chair of St. Mark, arrived at Gondar to enter upon the functions of his sacred office. Oubié, the tyrannical ruler of Tigré, had, with diplomatic sagacity, despatched an expensive mission to the Alexandrian Patriarch, to solicit a successor to the post so long vacant by the death of Abba Kérlos—a wily measure, involving the sacrifice, indeed, of lands and ecclesiastical revenues, but securing to himself a sure political preponderance among the manifold rulers in the North, who know no law but that of the strongest. Heretofore the dignity had invariably been conferred on some bigoted old monk, extracted from one of the convents of St. Anthony—the only monastic order recognized by the Coptic church. Much against his will, the patriarch elect was often dragged by force from his cloister, where he had passed years of abstinence and mortification, and being duly exalted to the episcopal throne, on which the residue of his days

were to be passed, he never failed to impart a full share of ignorance and superstition. But the new primate, raised at the early age of twenty-two years to the pontificate of Æthiopia, and invested with despotic powers, proved, fortunately for the country, to be possessed of abilities of a very superior order, whilst his mind had been expanded by a liberal education at Caïro under the Rev. Dr. Lieder, a pious and learned missionary of the Church of England.

One of the first steps of the new Abuna was to depute a confidential servitor to Shoa, as the bearer of a letter of compliments to myself, expressive of his desire to cultivate a friendly understanding, and urging on me a speedy visit to his court. War had for some months past been raging on the western frontier betwixt Goshoo, the ruler of Gojam, and his son Birroo, who had risen in open rebellion, and the messenger brought a confirmation of the long-rumoured defeat of the former, and of the forces of Ras Ali, which had been sent to his assistance. The return of killed and wounded is in this country never suffered to fall short of the reality, and on the present occasion it had certainly not lost by the distance it had travelled.

"It was a little before nightfall," said the turbaned priest, "that the rival armies, countless as blades of grass, came in sight of each other at Ungátta, on the banks of the Suggara. Before the morning dawned, Birroo, who occupied the upper

ground, moving down to the attack, secured the fords of the river. The action presently opened with a heavy fire of musketry and matchlocks, which did great execution. Five thousand warriors were slain—two thousand five hundred stand of arms were captured—Libán, who commanded, was, with several of his principal chiefs, taken prisoner —and Goshoo was compelled to seek the inviolable sanctuary afforded by the monastery of Dima Georgis. Five governors were hewn alive down the middle; and the conqueror, after standing up to his neck in water for three days, as an atonement for the slaughter he had committed among a Christian people, sent to Ras Ali a horse with its mane, tail, and ears cut off, and a pair of new trousers greatly soiled, with a haughty message to the effect, that these were but types of the fate that yet awaited his liege lord!"

The month of January had now come round; and the arrival of queen Besábesh, who invariably precedes the movements of the court by one day, proclaimed the advent of the Negoos to celebrate at the capital the festivities of the Abyssinian Christmas. Her Majesty had become extremely indisposed from the long journey, and was desirous of receiving medical aid; but it being contrary to the court etiquette that the royal consort should be seen by any male, an interview could not be accorded. Seated in a small closed tent, the hand of the illustrious patient was passed outside through

a tiny aperture; and, although eunuchs further embarrassed conversation, a condescending voice inquired, in reply to some common-place civilities, on the part of Dr. Kirk, "If I did not befriend the foreigners, pray who is there else to do so?"

Entertaining such a bigoted aversion to every Mohammadan custom, it cannot fail to appear singular that the licentious court of Shoa should have preserved one of the most objectionable—the seclusion of females. Yet such is the extreme jealousy on this point, that although from our first arrival the queen had expressed herself in the most friendly terms, and almost daily sent me through her maids of honour trifling presents of mead or bread, coupled with complimentary inquiries, an introduction, under any circumstances, was quite impracticable.

From day to day, however, the most curious applications were still preferred for beads, trinkets, cloth, and perfumery, and the utmost disappointment was evinced at my making no demand in return. "I possess honey and I possess butter, and have fowls and eggs in abundance," was the undeviating message. "Why do not my children ask for what they want? All I have is theirs, for all that they have is mine!"

Even when residing at a distance, I continually received laconic notes on scrolls of parchment varying in breadth from one inch to three, bearing neither signature nor superscription, and tightly

rolled up in wax. Their contents revealed some newly conceived fancy, such as might have been expected from a queen that eats raw beef. "The brass in your country is like gold," formed the sum and substance of one epistle, "and you might therefore order the bracelets to be made of the pattern sent by the hands of Dinkenich[1];" and again, "May this letter come to the hands of the English commander. Are you well? are you well? are you quite well? That the soap may not end quick, you will send it in large quantities, saith Besábesh."

Not long after Her Majesty's arrival, she sent me an unfortunate child, recently purchased from a Gurágué slave caravan, with a request that *Hubsheeri* might be exchanged for some clear salad oil which had met with special approval "for medicine for the face;" and great surprise was elicited by my reply, "that such a course of proceeding would involve disgrace and criminality, inasmuch as the unchristian-like traffic in human beings was held in abhorrence beyond the great water." But in this matter the Emábiet was not singular. Certain of the courtiers, who considered themselves under obligations, had previously tendered us "strong Shánkela slaves" as a Christmas gift, and all had been equally at a loss to comprehend our motives in refusing.

Amongst the followers that I had brought from

[1] i. e. "She is beautiful."—One of Her Majesty's Abigails.

India was a native of Cabool, who acted in capacity of tailor, and his proficiency in the needle involved a most unreasonable tax upon his services. Day after day for weeks and months had he been in attendance at the palace; and when at length, under the royal eye, he had completed a sumptuous *burnoos* [1], on the elaborate embroidery of which half the treasures in the *gemdjia* house were lavished, the king, in the plenitude of his munificence, sent by the hands of Ayto Melkoo a shabby cotton cloth, value three shillings and sixpence, with a half-starved goat, and a message that "it was Christmas, and the tailor might eat."

Hajji Mirza was furious. "Take back these gifts to your Shah," he growled indignantly; "I want none of them. By the beard of the prophet, I'm the son of a Pathan; and praise be to Allah, the meanest overseer of a village in Affghanistán is possessed of greater liberality than Sáhela Selássie."

This *tirade* had fortunately been delivered in a tongue not familiar to the ears of the king's Master of the Horse, who was meanwhile diligently occupied with the Pathan's needle and scissors. Having taken the bag out of his hands, and extracted a scrap of red cloth, he had carefully fashioned a minute cross, which, with elbows squared, he was now proceeding to stitch over a hole in the lower part of his striped cotton robe.

[1] Cloak.

"Why do you do that?" inquired the tailor, peevishly, in broken Amháric, not relishing the interference in his department, and anxious also to exhibit his own talents. "Let me darn it for you, and then there will be no blemish."

"No," replied the party addressed, with great gravity declining the proffered assistance. "Don't you know that the hole has been burnt, and therefore that it *must* be repaired with another colour?"

In Abyssinia, as in other parts of Christendom, the festival of the nativity is a season of frolic and rejoicing, during which people display the strength of their piety by the quantity of beef that they can consume; the principal difference being, that it is here eaten raw instead of roasted. Our cook, a Portuguese from Goâ, had been frequently summoned to the palace for the royal edification in culinary matters, but although he was a *boná fide* Christian, and wore a "máteb" too, the king could never persuade himself to partake of any of the viands prepared by his hands. Loaf sugar being now employed in the manufacture of a Christmas cake, His Majesty, after attentively watching operations, enquired, as a matter of course, "How they made it white? Was the ox whose blood was employed killed in the name of the holy Trinity?" "Certainly not." "Then it might remain," was the abrupt rejoinder. "*Ye noor*—I don't want it; it doth not please me."

The Abyssinians, assigning to the world an ex-

istence of 7334 years, refer the birth of Christ to the five thousand five hundreth after the creation. Thus eight years have been lost in the computation of time, and their Anno Domini 1834 corresponded with the Christian era 1842.

On the 4th of January, which was Christmas eve, the usual contest took place on the king's meadow between the royal household and the dependents of the Purveyor-General and the Dedj Agafári. A cloth ball having been struck with a mall, a struggle for its possession follows, and the party by which it is thrice caught in succession being declared victorious, enjoys the privilege of abusing the vanquished during the ensuing two days of festivity, the first of which is celebrated by the male, the second by the female portion of the population. Every tongue is unloosed; and the foulest slander may be heaped upon the most illustrious, as well as upon the holiest personages in the land, the monarch alone excepted.

His Majesty's partisans gained the day, and we were summoned to the palace to witness their Christmas exhibition. Filling the court-yard, they danced and recited before the throne couplets defamatory of all the principal functionaries present, not omitting the Lord Bishop, who appeared to consider himself infinitely complimented by the vices whereof he stood accused. Bodily imperfections were not overlooked; asses and dromedaries afforded frequent comparisons; and the fat of the

corpulent State Gaoler, who sat a witness to the festivities, was declared sufficient to light the entire capital during the approaching public entertainment, which, given at the expense of the defeated chiefs, closed the disgraceful Saturnalia in riot and debauchery.

CHAPTER XXIII.

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY.

But by far the greatest holiday of the Abyssinian year is held on the Epiphany, styled Temkát[1], when the baptism of our Lord, by John, in the river Jordan, is commemorated with extraordinary pomp. He who neglects to undergo the annual purification enjoined on this day by the Æthiopic church, is considered to carry with him the burden of every sin committed during the preceding twelve months, and to be surely visited by sickness and misfortune, whereas those who perform the rite, are believed to have emerged thoroughly cleared and regenerated.

On the evening preceding this festival, the priests of all the churches in Ankóber and the environs, carrying the holy *tábots* under gaudy canopies, assembled in the open space, termed Aráda, immediately in front of the palace. Here, according to custom, they were received by the governor of the town, who, after falling prostrate on his face before the arks, escorted the procession to the river Airára —the clergy dancing and singing, whilst the female portion of the inhabitants lining the hill-side, in-

[1] i. e. Baptism.

dulged in the shrillest vociferation. A tent for each church had been erected on the bank; and a temporary dam being thrown across the stream, the night was spent in chanting appropriate hymns and psalms.

Long before dawn, the pent up waters having been blessed by the officiating priest, the entire population, the young, the old, the wealthy, and the indigent, gathered from many miles round, casting off their habiliments, flocked promiscuously into the pool—even babes who were unable to totter being thrown in by their naked mothers. Not the slightest modesty was evinced by either sex, all mingling together in a state of perfect nudity, and affecting, under the light of innumerable torches and flambeaux, which shed the broad glare of day over the disgraceful scene, to believe that a supernatural veil concealed each other's shame.

The sacrament of Christ's supper was then administered, accompanied by rites and ceremonies highly unbecoming the solemnity of this most sacred of Christian institutes. The multitude next proceeded to devour a pile of loaves, and to drain accumulated pitchers of beer, supplied by the neighbouring governors. Here too the most indecent excesses were committed. Declaring themselves to have swallowed a specific against intoxication, the clergy indulge to any extent they please, and each priest vying with his brother in the quantities he shall quaff, avers that if "the whole of

the Lord's bread and the Lord's wine" be not consumed on the spot, a famine will arise throughout the land!

Festivities terminated, the officiating dignitaries, robed and mitred, preceded the holy arks and canopies in grand procession to the capital, singing hallelujahs. Holding in their left hands cymbals in imitation of David, and in the right the ecclesiastical staff, wherewith various absurd gesticulations are described, they danced and sang for some time in front of the palace gate. As usual, the performance displayed the most uncouth attitudes, and the least graceful figures. The beard and the crutch, and the aged face, and the sacred calling, were but ill in unison with the mountebank capers undertaken; and the actors rather resembled masks at the carnival than holy functionaries of the church.

"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests," is a passage of Scripture which the clergy of Shoa interpret to their own advantage. "Who are the foxes," they invariably inquire, "but the kings and the governors of the land, who seek only after worldly vanities? and who the birds but the priests and bishops, who in hymns and hallelujahs thus fly upwards, and build their nests in heaven?"

The clergy are distinguished from the laity by a beard, and by a monstrous white turban encumbering the head. This is designed to typify Moses covering his face on his descent from the Mount,

when he had received the tables of the law. Their sacred persons are usually shrouded in a black woollen cloak, studded with emblems of the faith, and furnished with a peaked hood. The sacerdotal vest was first embroidered by command of Hatzé David, the father of St. Theodórus, to commemorate the arrival from Jerusalem of a fragment of the true cross on which Christ died; and officiating priests are expected to appear in one of these, composed either of scarlet or party-coloured cloth.

A silver or brazen cross and a slender crutch are the never-failing accoutrements of the priest; and on all occasions of ceremony, the mitre, the censer, and the great umbrellas are conspicuous objects. Long rods, furnished with streaming pennants, manufactured of the light pith of the juwarree, in alternating bands of red and white, were carried by the host of dirty boys who swelled the procession; and after the labours of the day were over, these emblems of regeneration were hung up in the churches as votive offerings. On the conclusion of the exhibition, the clergy dispersed under a salvo of musketry to their respective churches, and individuals who, from any unavoidable circumstance, had been precluded from participating in the general immersion, were then privately baptized, males and females being alike divested of every portion of apparel, and plunged into a large reservoir prepared for their reception.

Four years have elapsed since Sáhela Selássie underwent this lustration, wherein he was wont

annually to participate, but from which he is now held exempt, in consideration of the height of his power. Although in a state of perfect nudity, a cloth was held around him during the ceremony—a privilege to which neither virgins nor females of the highest rank are ever admitted.

Pots and pans that have been defiled by the unclean touch of a Mohammadan, are on this day purified by immersion in the water that has been blessed by the priest. Among many other superstitions there exists a firm belief, that all mules and horses that are not led forth to exercise on the festival of *Temkát* will die during the ensuing year. It is considered to be "a day of great splendour;" and on pain of excommunication, every good Christian is bound to appear clad in his best habiliments, and in all the trinkets he can muster, to the end that he may prostrate himself before the ark which he has adopted.

If enforced with rigour, excommunication is in fact a capital punishment, for it is *interdictio aquâ et igne*. No one can speak to, or eat, or drink with the proscribed person, nor even enter his house. The offender can neither buy nor sell, nor visit. He cannot recover debts. He may be murdered at pleasure by any ruffian who will take the trouble to cut his throat, and when dead his body cannot be buried.

The bell, book, and candle are to be hired by any disappointed enemy, and the hooded priest may be

purchased to perform the ceremony; but the undertaking in some cases is not without its attendant danger. The cells of the state prison frequently enclose the rash fanatic who wantonly interferes with the royal salvation. Scanty fare and close confinement eventually insure absolution, and the martyr to religious intolerance is summarily banished from the realm. Another powerful antidote is found in the *argumentum baculinum*, which, when persuasively applied to the shoulders of arrogant church pride, by the sturdy sinews of Europe especially, possesses a wonderful efficacy in allaying the storm.

A century has not elapsed since excommunication was performed upon one of the fair sons of the North. The turbaned bearer of the bell, book, and candle, was quietly introduced into the domicile, and his countenance fell as he perceived the object of his visit armed with a formidable cudgel. "My father must have been mistaken," was the exordium that greeted his astounded ear, as the staff descended with an equally startling salutation— "My father never could have proposed the excommunication of his dear friend." Again the weapon pattered upon the priestly back; and during full five minutes an able running commentary was supported by frequent playful taps over the head, to quicken the clerical understanding. This powerful appeal concluded, the crest-fallen functionary willingly withdrew his ban,

and bestowing entire absolution, slunk back to his cell, mentally resolved to interfere no more with the incomprehensible European, who neither displayed terror at the curse of the church, nor entertained respect for the sacred persons of her ministers.

Unquies, the Bishop of Shoa, had long meditated the adoption of extreme measures towards the British escort, whom he declared to be no better than Mohammadans, since it was notorious that they did not kneel when the holy ark passed, and had no hesitation in partaking of flesh slaughtered by an infidel, instead of in the name of the holy Trinity. No one, however, could be found sufficiently bold to undertake the customary process where the Irish soldier was concerned; and the king's "strong-monk" had been fain at length to content himself with the clandestine promulgation of his spiritual denunciation for the many heresies committed.

The honorary distinctions conferred by the monarch for the destruction of the elephant first produced a good effect, which was still increased by the presentation of the silver shield that distinguishes the highest functionaries in the land; and although the opinions of the clergy generally were still far from favourable, there was a certain influential priest who invariably found it convenient to pass the long dreary evenings over the Residency fire. The pious father evinced no dis-

inclination to participate in the good things of this world; and whilst sipping his strong drink, it was his delight to speculate upon scriptural grounds whether the skin of Eve was really white or black, and to prove that locusts could never have been tasted by John the Baptist, because they form the food of the unclean Mohammadan.

Edifying topics such as these were doubtless handled with greater eloquence than either abstinence, or the mortification of the flesh. Proceeding on his annual visit to Debra Libanos, the principal resort of those who prey upon the credulity of the public, the devout father at length stood voluntarily forward as the advocate of the Gyptzis; and so eloquently did he explain away the non-observance of fasts and other imputed heresies, that a wax taper of which we had made him the bearer was actually lighted in the sanctuary of Saint Tekla Haïmanót, and an immediate revulsion thereby created in the ecclesiastical sentiments entertained throughout the entire realm.

CHAPTER XXIV.

EXCURSION TO BERHUT, ON THE SOUTH-EASTERN FRONTIER OF SHOA.

I DEEMED it to be an object of great geographical importance that the flying survey of the kingdom of Shoa should be completed by a visit to the country forming the boundary to the south-east, famous for its numerous volcanoes, recently in full activity, and hitherto untrodden in any part by European foot. A pretext presented itself in the existence of the wild buffalo in the lower districts; but it was necessary, in the first instance, to overcome the royal scruples, which opposed our attempting the chase of that animal. This I at length succeeded in doing; and the despot being made to comprehend that his children ran less risk of being demolished than he had formerly chosen to believe, vouchsafed the desired permission. The requisite instructions were issued to men in authority to promote the views of those "whom the king delighteth to honour;" and, preceded by queen Besábesh, His Majesty then set out on his annual visit to Mésur Méder.

"There is one point," he observed, when we pro-

ceeded to take leave, "on which I wanted to consult you. The locusts are destroying the crops, and the priests have been unable by their prayers to arrest their progress. Have you no medicine to drive them away?"

Ayto Wolda Hana, under whose immediate orders are all the second-class governors in the realm, had received commands to summon to Ankóber the Misleyni[1], or vice-governor, of Berhut and of the plains lying betwixt the Casam and the Háwash—a tract inhabited partly by the Adaïel, whose nominal fealty is preserved through the influence of Wulásma Mohammad, and partly by the Karaiyo Galla, over whom the Negoos asserts more substantial jurisdiction. But many days elapsed without the appearance of that worthy, whom His Majesty had delegated to make efficient arrangements for our journey; and Déftera Séna, chief of the king's scriveners, having, after twelve hours of close application, contrived to complete a written representation to the throne, a courier was despatched with it on horseback to the royal camp. No Abyssinian will ever think of declaring himself the bearer of an express, unless pointedly questioned upon that head, nor will he then relinquish possession until distinctly ordered so to do. On the return of the special messenger, who had been three days absent on the service confided to him, I asked him for the answer, but my application was followed by none

[1] Lit. "Like myself."

of the usual fumbling among the folds of his girdle for the tiny scroll in its wax envelope; and the caitiff was finally fain to confess, that on being summoned to the presence of his sovereign at Mésur Méder, and commanded to deliver up the document with which he had been charged, he for the first time recollected that it had been mislaid at Ankóber!

But a peasant, who fortunately fell in with the missing parchment by the road-side, had carried it, in accordance with the immutable law of the realm, straightway to the king, who immediately, upon becoming aware of the contents, and long before Déftera Séna had completed a duplicate copy, deputed Mamrie Salomon, now chief of the eunuchs, to see his royal intentions on my behalf carried into instant effect. A number of tribute-bearers from Berhut were on the point of returning to their district; they were forthwith pressed for the transportation of our baggage, and all minor difficulties being at length overcome, we quitted the capital on a cold morning towards the close of March.

Immediately beyond the church dedicated to Aboo, one of the most celebrated of Abyssinian saints, the path struck off to the southward along the course of the Airára, which, from the diminutive mill-stream of the Cháka, soon assumes a more brawling demeanour, and receives numerous tributaries from the mountains on either side, its deep channel cutting so smoothly through the trap rock, as to wear the appearance of being artificially formed. This

valley is extremely varied in width, extending in some parts from six to seven miles, whilst in others it is reduced to a mere ravine by the converging spurs of the two great ranges. Throughout, the scenery is tame, the cliffs being flat and naked, and the vegetation restricted to a small scrubby species of dwarf acacia, interspersed with the euphorbia, styled *kolquál*--the charcoal obtained from which is preferred in the manufacture of gunpowder. But wheresoever the plough could be held, there the hand of industry had been busy, and for the first eight miles there was little uncultivated soil.

In these parts the rains descend with extreme violence; and having, in the first instance, scooped up and carried away all the rotten debris, each succeeding deluge has added its mining activity and perseverance, until the entire mountain range, for miles, presents the singular appearance of a succession of perfectly isolated cones, the apices of many being crowned by villages or by the dwellings of great men, whilst the sloping sides are smoothed and levelled with the utmost nicety. The valley is thickly peopled, flourishing hamlets peeping out in every direction; but, as in other parts of the country, the best of the land, whether arable or pasture, pertains to the crown—Bukerfine, one of the richest farms in the district, having been conferred upon Misht 'Malafeya'[1], a royal concubine, by whom the king has a favourite daughter.

[1] i. e. "The Lady Excellent."

Many monasteries dotting the wooded peaks, are here visible in all the pride of place above the residence of the common herd—their localities no doubt tending to rivet the chains of the infatuated Abyssinian. Priestly intimations issuing from a temple often shrouded from human ken under impenetrable fog, are received with increased attention, and the thunder of excommunication commands utter abasement and prostration of spirit, when fulminated from these grand scenes of elementary strife. The revenues of many of the villages passed are appropriated to the service of the church; those of Moi-Amba, containing upwards of two hundred houses, being appropriated to the cathedral of St. Michael in Ankóber.

A few hours' journey had substituted the heat of a tropical climate for the cool breezes of the mountains; and the momentarily increasing temperature afforded sufficient proof of the rapid declination of the route. even had it not led along the banks of the Airára, which, having been crossed and recrossed a dozen times, was now tumbling down through a succession of foaming cascades, with a sound most refreshing to the ear. Emerging at length from its walls of basalt, and joined by the Kubánoo, bearing a large body of water from the west, it expands into a broad channel, and is employed in irrigating the extensive cotton plantations which every where abound on its borders. The stream is diverted by a simple pile of pebbles; but the elevated aque-

ducts, somewhat ingeniously termed *masalel wahá*, "the water-ladder," are constructed with infinite care, and passing frequently along narrow ledges, are widened by means of wooden tressels supporting a trough of brushwood and shingle. A sufficient supply is thus raised to nurture the magnificent cotton plants, the stems of many of which measuring seven, eight, and nine inches in girth, support a crop that, on arriving at maturity, does justice to these gigantic proportions.

Shortly after the accession of Sáhela Selássie, His Majesty marched to the Kubánoo, for the purpose of holding a conference with the Adaïel; and his armoury being in those days by no means so well furnished as it now is, the array of old matchlocks was regarded by the Moslems with the utmost contempt and derision. A rush was made during the night upon the royal camp—many of the Christians were slain—and whilst the remnant, with their youthful sovereign, fled in dismay to the stronghold of the capital, the treacherous assailants returned undisturbed in triumph to their desert plains.

Kittel Yellish, the village at which we proposed to halt, had been represented by our guides to be situated within a very moderate march of Ankóber; but the Abyssinians possess not a better idea of the measure of distance than of the value of time; and, after eight hours passed in the saddle, we took refuge about sunset in the Moslem ham-

let of Manyo, a cluster of huts crowning the summit of a cone, and overlooking a wild uncultivated tract, intersected by a labyrinth of tremendous ravines, arched over by the thorny branches of the acacia, and other vegetation of a strictly tropical aspect. Swine, agazin, and some of the smaller species of antelope, here abound to such an extent, that the peasants attempt no crop but cotton, exchanging the raw material for what they need of other produce. The village was strongly fortified in all directions against the inroads of the leopard and hyena, by palisades enclosing a stiff thorn fence; and there being no room even for the smallest tent, we passed the night in a shed rudely thatched with the leaves of the papyrus, which would not have been tenable for five minutes in the alpine regions that we had quitted in the morning.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE ROYAL GRANARY AT DUMMAKOO.

THE reception that we experienced at the hands of the virago who owned this comfortless hovel, had been neither hospitable nor flattering. In the temporary absence of her husband, the wrinkled beldame considered herself to be vested with charge of the hamlet, and for a full hour after our arrival, standing in the dark porch of her adjacent house, she had exerted her cracked voice in a tissue of shrill comments levelled against the impropriety of entering private demesnes unannounced. The first crowing of the cock invited a renewal of her far from melodious clamour, and it was not silenced without much difficulty, even by the jingle of silver crowns.

The road now descended to the Umptoo, a rapid stream, with a broad stony bed, which rises in the lofty mountain Asságud. Cotton, in its most perfect state of cultivation, clothed all the level terraces. The papyrus, here, as in Egypt, designated *pheela*, fringed the banks of the stream in close thick patches; the honey-sucker, arrayed in green and gold, flashed in the morning sun, as it darted

among the flowering acacias; birds of rare plumage filled the tangled brushwood; and the fantastic forms of the circumjacent mountains enhanced the beauty of the wild scene. But every man's hand was armed for strife. The peasant carried spear and shield, and wore the sword girded to his loins; and the site of his habitation had been carefully selected with a long look-out on all sides as a precaution against attack and invasion.

Leaving the bed of the river, which measured some eighty yards across, the path ascended a ridge running east and west, and deriving its appellation from the conspicuous peaks of Golultee and Demsee. To the eastward, through a wide gap in the mountains, could be seen a long reach of the Airára, now expanded into a noble river, by the junction of the Umptoo, and glittering under its numberless channels, which bear in the rains a vast volume of water to the Casam, to be poured eventually into the Háwash. From the summit of the pass in the direction of Ankóber, a strange view extended for a distance of thirty or forty miles—a broken abyss of hill tops seeming as though the waves of the troubled ocean had been suddenly petrified in their progress—Mamrat, the monster billow, shewing above all in the far horizon, as the last barrier arrested in full career.

The belt of rugged hills of limestone slate, through which the course lay, is an almost uninhabited waste of neutral ground, forming the boundary

betwixt the Christian and Moslem subjects of Shoa. A few goats alone found a sufficiency of food among the scanty leaves of the now withered acacias; and the human denizens of the soil were wild as their rocky mountains. Fleeing at the approach of the white men, they took up a secure position on the very summit of the loftiest peaks, and looked down with evident mistrust upon the cavalcade, which was sufficiently well armed, and formidable in point of number, to instil terror into the bosom of all conscious of the wrath of princes, and of tribute rashly withheld. The termination of this sultry range forms an abutment upon the country of the Adaïel, whence is derived all the sulphur employed in the manufacture of gunpowder in the royal arsenals; and specimens which were picked up by the way would lead to the inference that the vein continued even beyond the point at which we crossed.

Like that of the Umptoo, the bed of the Korie, another tributary of the Casam, to which the road next descended, is bordered with luxuriant cotton cultivation, and in many parts overgrown with tangled papyrus. Shut in by a deep valley, it threads the mountainous district of Dingai-terri, and many wild bananas were seen luxuriating on its moist banks. The dusty path led on through a jungle composed chiefly of a bastard description of the Balm of Gilead, which being crushed under the foot, scented the whole atmosphere. On our arrival near the Moslem cemetery, below Kittel

Yellish, the civility of the governor of the district was evinced in the display, on skins beneath the trees, of every article considered necessary for Christian sustenance during this most holy season of Lent—bread, beer, and water proving truly acceptable to the Abyssinian followers, already much distressed by the intense heat of a nearly vertical sun, to which they were so little inured. A wild roguish-looking Moslem dervish, decked in a rosary of large brown berries, and carrying a staff of truly portentous dimensions, here introduced himself as an acquaintance made many months previously at Dáthára, upon which grounds he considered himself entitled to share in the repast. Leading a roving and an idle life, and armed with scrip and water-flagon, he had for years subsisted upon the alms of the superstitious followers of the Prophet; and if judgment might be formed from his sleek exterior, they had not been niggard of their contributions.

Grey, water-worn precipices, with deep semicircular basins at their base, now flanked the road, a formation of limestone occasionally out-cropping beneath a thick stratum of basalt. After crossing the bed of the Meynso, we gained a more level tract, over which a gallop of five miles led to Dummakoo, one of the royal granaries, wh re, by His Majesty's commands, our head-quarters were to be established. This village, constructed on a knoll three thousand feet below the level of Ankó-

ber, is situated in a fine, open, undulating country, well populated, and intersected by numerous milk-bush hedges. Richly cultivated, and fanned by a cool breeze, it afforded a most agreeable contrast to the barren sultry hills through which the greater part of our course had lain. The lofty range of Mentshar and Bulgá, rising to an extinguisher-like cone called Megásus, was the principal feature in the landscape; and at the foot of these mountains, which abound in coal, sinks the valley of the Casam, which was to form the scene of coming operations.

One of the king's numerous magazines for grain and farm produce extends its long barn-like front in the centre of the hamlet, every house of which is screened by a tall green hedge; and that the safety of the royal stores has been alone consulted in the selection of the site, is sufficiently proved by the fact of the inhabitants being compelled to drive their cattle many miles on either side for their daily draught of water, whilst the long-tressed Mohammadan damsels are fain to trudge with a heavy jar at their back to a remote pool, carefully fenced and barricadoed.

All agricultural operations connected with the royal farm at Berhut, are annually performed by the surrounding population *en masse*. Several heavy showers which had recently fallen having fully prepared the ground for the reception of the seed, a vast concourse of rustics had collected from the

entire district—the inhabitants of each hamlet bringing their own oxen and implements of husbandry; so that in the course of a very few hours many hundred acres, already ploughed, were sown and harrowed by their united efforts, the praises of the despot being loudly sung throughout the continuance of the tributary labour, which is similarly exacted in all parts of the kingdom.

On the crop arriving at maturity, a sheaf is cut and presented in token of joy to the governor of the district. The reaping and threshing again call for the assembly of the agricultural population; and the harvest-home having been celebrated with suitable festivity, the accessions to the royal granaries are duly registered by scribes delegated on the part of the crown.

Upon a rising ground about a mile from Dummakoo, is held the monthly market of the district. Tradition asserts that one of the inhabitants of a neighbouring hamlet saw in a dream that the Imám Abdool Kádur, appearing upon this hill, picked up a stone, and in a loud voice proclaimed that the spot belonged henceforth to himself; and no sooner had the pious disciple of the Prophet declared his vision, than the site was adopted by the unanimous voice of the assembled multitude for the celebration of the bazaar, which, in the lapse of a few generations, has become one of considerable importance.

Almost immediately upon our arrival I received a

visit from Habti Mariam[1], the vice-governor, whose residence is at Wurdoo, the principal village of the Berhut district. He explained that his non-appearance to escort the party from Ankóber had arisen from severe ophthalmia, contracted during a recent visit to the hot low country. Some very potent amulets had been now attached to various parts of his body in order to remove the disorder; and the good man was moreover provided with a large raw onion, with which he rubbed his eyes alternately during the interview.

It has already been mentioned that the influence of Wulasma Mohammad extends along the whole of the Moslem districts of the eastern frontier; and it had now been advantageously exerted in the despatch of a body of his immediate retainers, commanded first to announce to the Adaïel on the border our intention of visiting their country, and afterwards to escort us thither. In order to counteract any offensive demonstration to which this unusual excursion might give rise, Habti Mariam had issued orders to assemble his lévy, in accordance with strict injunctions received from his royal master to secure the safety of his "European children," upon penalty of loss of liberty and government. The greatest difficulty was, however, experienced in persuading his followers to undertake the much-dreaded journey to the lower regions, as well from their unanimous detestation of the intense heat, as their innate dread

[1] i. e. "The property of the Virgin."

of the lawless population; and he was finally compelled to put them to the blush by a declaration of his resolve to perform the king's behest at all risks in his own person; when a handful of the boldest setting the example, the lists were speedily filled to the number of two hundred and fifty, which force had been considered by the Negoos as sufficient for the excursion.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ADEN ON THE CASAM RIVER, THE TERRITORY OF THE ADEL SUB-TRIBE GAREEMRA DAMOOSA.

A canopy of thick clouds clinging to the high hills of Ankóber had indicated that rain still continued to deluge the more elevated regions; but on the wide undulating plains of Berhut, the thermometer in the tents stood at 105°; and although the sky was occasionally overcast in the morning, the sun shone with due tropical fervour up to the day fixed for departure to the low country. It was still dark when the cavalcade filed past the church of St. George, which, ornamented with a triangle of ostrich eggs as a spire, stands at the extremity of the village; and as every Abyssinian lip in succession saluted with a pious kiss the rough bark of the kolquál trees by which it is fenced round, many an offering was vowed for individual safe return from the dangerous expedition.

Dawn of day found the party at the termination of the tract of table land claimed by the crown; and the sun, as he rose behind the lofty peak of Assibote, lighted our descent by the Dodóti pass, a winding path overhanging the valleys, which still lay in

darkness. Commanding a boundless prospect across the burning plains below, it leads by a very judiciously selected line, with a gradual descent of eighteen hundred feet, over barren mountain ridges rapidly diminishing in height, to the foot of the Abyssinian range, where, watered by the Casam, stretches the Adel district of Aden; and beyond, wild, desolate, and hot, and surrounded by extensive white desert tracts, rise the isolated craters of Sáboo and Fantáli.

The entire mountain-side is well peopled by Mohammadan subjects of Shoa, whose progenitors arriving from the country of the sun with the great invader Graan, selected this as the location most congenial to their habits, and with it bequeathed to their descendants all the ancestral aversion to a cold climate A stronger and more athletic race than the Amhára, the dark-eyed females present features far more feminine and agreeable than their coarse highland sisters, with forms more becomingly attired. The hot dusty hamlets and scattered farm-houses, which crown many of the peaks, are surrounded by extensive cultivation. The square domiciles, constructed of loose stones with mud terraces, afford sufficient accommodation both for owner and cattle, and the rich stores of grain proclaim a life of industry and abundance.

The retinue of the governor increased rapidly with his advance. Every hamlet now poured forth its quota; and before reaching the Fótah river, he

mustered in horse and foot full four hundred retainers. For some miles the road wound along the dry channel of the mountain torrent, the banks rising on either side steep and perpendicular, so as to form a deep chasm, partially obstructed by huge masses that had been precipitated from above. Here and there a solitary Karaiyo hamlet met the eye—the flocks and herds assembled in the neighbourhood of the only well, around which the heathen maidens, in rude leathern petticoats, fearlessly drew water, proclaiming a district dependent upon Shoa. Debouching at length upon the plain of the Casam, the increase of temperature was at once perceptible; and the feeble breeze could not be felt through the mass of acacias and wild aloe which in full blossom covered the entire face of the country.

We were here joined by a weather-beaten old warrior, covered with silver decorations for valour, who had lost an eye by the spear of the Galla. He was to act in capacity of guide; and an hour through the low jungle brought us to the river at a point where the width is from seventy to eighty yards, a strong stream of turbid water running through a rocky channel, in parts choked with groves of tamarisk. Skirting the northern bank for a considerable distance across hot loose boulders and hard volcanic terraces, we gained a prominent height, whence the view extended over the lowest valley threaded by the well-wooded Casam, the whole reach of which was covered with great herds of horned cattle.

Here the cavalcade halted, and was presently joined, from a group of Adel wigwams, by Godána, one of the braves of the Gareemra Damoosa, carrying a broad-headed spear, and wearing his lank hair twisted into thin cords. A long and animated conference ensued, through the medium of an interpreter; in the course of which it was set forth, on the part of the puissant warrior, that the appearance of so large a body of the Amhára had led his tribe to apprehend meditated hostilities; that their flocks and herds were grazing in the vale below, peaceably tended by their young men and maidens; and that as the unwonted descent of such a host of Christians could not fail to create great alarm, he was desirous, before authorising further advance, to be more distinctly apprised of the nature and object of the visit. It was explained by the governor, "that the sole intention was to hunt buffaloes—that the white men were the special guests of the king; and having already slain elephants at Giddem, His Majesty sought to honour his friends the Adaïel, by the performance of equally extraordinary feats in their country:—concluding with the assurance, that the fear of the Ittoo Galla having alone dictated the presence of so many followers, both Godána and his people might rest satisfied that the visit was in good faith, and perfectly pacific."

The cattle having first been driven to a distance, the Christian chivalry were finally, after much

demur, permitted to descend into the bed of the Casam, and there to enjoy the shelter afforded by groves of spreading tamarinds which grace its shady banks, the elders of the tribe being meanwhile summoned to debate the subject more fully. Parties of the Adel population of the adjoining district of Dessé now sauntered up by threes and fours, and tall, gaunt, meagre savages they were—their loins girded by a scant and filthy rag, but each equipped with a serviceable creese, a battered shield, and a spear decked with some trophy of the chase. The scowling downcast eye, habitually half closed against the glare of their parched plains—the dissatisfaction so legibly written on every face—the sun-burnt bushy wig—the pinched features—the loose shambling gait—the air of insolent independence—and not least, the rank disagreeable odour—all combined to proclaim them members of the great family peopling this sultry desert for hundreds of miles, and differing but slightly in manners or in appearance throughout the entire of the wide extended tract.

In the course of another fierce palaver, it was intimated that many expected to die before the affair should be terminated; but the promise of handsome remuneration to the survivors worked successfully upon Adel cupidity. After devouring the greater portion of our own supply of bread, which to those who till not the ground forms an unheard of luxury, they unanimously expressed

their resolution of acceding to the royal wishes, and of leading the way to their choicest preserves. Greatly to the horror of Moslem antipathy, the river had meanwhile been dragged of many of its finny inhabitants by the Amhára, who are permitted to eat fish *ad libitum*, although prohibited from touching either flesh or fowl during the tedious fast of Lent.

Under the guidance of a party selected by the tribe, we now continued our route along the bank of the river; and after passing a volcanic fissure, which winds for miles between high walls of black lava to the very foot of the Fantáli crater, a halt was called upon a spot lower down the Casam, where grass was abundant. Here we bivouacked among huge loose boulders; and between the bold headlands which bound the stream, numerous glimpses were obtained of its distant course. Thermal springs were stated to exist in the vicinity of Fantáli, now about six miles distant to the south. Although said to have emitted no smoke within the memory of the present generation, this hill was pictured as a fiery furnace, and a desert waste, inhabited only by gins and demons—doubtless a less formidable race than the Ittoo and Aroosi Galla, who continually prowl over the intervening plain. The presence of these predatory neighbours, added to our former experience of Adel treachery, and the habitual apathy and timidity of every Amhára escort, enforced the necessity of precaution in so

wild a spot; and in spite of the fatigue entailed by the sultry march, we accordingly maintained throughout the night a disciplined vigilance by a revival of the long-neglected rules of "watch and ward."

CHAPTER XXVII.

TRIUMPH OVER THE FOREST BULL.

ALMOST before break of day we were in the saddle; and having passed the lava-blocks which bounded the camp, we came upon a level tract entirely composed of hard clay. Wide-spreading camel-thorn acacias in full blossom, with their rich perfume, loaded the morning air even to satiety, and in long lines and clumps separated the outskirts into a succession of delightful glades of the most inviting aspect, which promised to teem with wild beasts of every variety. Five of the principal Adaïel attended us on horseback, together with a chosen band of mounted Moslems, from the retinue of Habti Mariam, decked out in the flaunting spoils of lions and leopards which had fallen to their prowess. This motley group of wild riders set off at a furious pace across the flat, some scouring after every insignificant animal that was descried, whilst others, truer wood-craftsmen, diligently scanned the ground over which they galloped.

Last night's traces of the wanton strength of the elephant were visible among the noble trees. Huge branches, twisted from the stem, lay scattered in

various quarters, and, together with the fresh foot-marks of the devastators, those of a herd of buffaloes were presently discovered. I made many ineffectual attempts to decrease the number of the rabble train, the disturbance they created having the effect, like the tail of the rattle-snake, of warning all of the approach of enemies. Several troops of agázin, throwing back their long spiral horns, fled at our approach. Myriads of clamorous guinea-fowl, whirring above the grove in every direction, spread the alarm far and wide; and the quarry we sought, driven deeper and deeper into the dark recesses, finally took shelter in a sea of tangled bulrushes, which skirted the borders of numerous rivulets of running water that pour their muddy tribute into the Casam.

During several hours thus fruitlessly passed, the exertions of the retinue were most unremitting to prevent success; but they grew weary at last, and I then succeeded in inducing a small party on foot, with three of the governor's braves, to precede me into the covert. Here the cast of a few hundred yards revealed the tracks of a buffalo, and we carried the trail through thick groves of wild tamarisk, whose shady boughs, meeting over-head, formed natural bowers and arcades. The tumult had now ceased, and we stole in Indian file through fields of tall flags, preserving the strictest silence, and carefully avoiding contact with every projecting twig. At intervals, the fresher traces of the quarry

demonstrated that he was close at hand, and we had not advanced more than half a mile before a measured splashing of water in the broad channel below gave notice of his actual presence.

The leading Adel cast a keen glance through the intervening screen of blue tamarisk, and looking me significantly in the face, pointed to both his eyes. Creeping cautiously to the brink of the river bank, where it rose perpendicularly to the height of twenty feet, I perceived a noble buffalo rolling from side to side, as he waded indolently across the stream, which reached above his girth, ever and anon whisking his tasseled tail to dislodge a host of persecuting flies. His intention evidently was to land immediately below the ambush that I had taken; and as less than fifty yards intervened, each step that he advanced rendered the target more unfavourable. Not a second therefore was to be lost. A two-ounce ball through the point of the shoulder, though it tumbled the unwieldy animal on his haunches, did not sufficiently paralyze his giant strength to bring him fairly down, and before I could obtain my double-barrelled rifle, he had burst from the eddying water, and plunged into the adjacent thicket.

No trace of blood rewarded the closest scrutiny; and, after a few minutes' deliberation, my attendants pronounced the animal unscathed; but finding me positive as to the spot in which the bullet had taken effect, and firmly resolved not to abandon the quest, they made several able casts among the tall flags

that waved over the rivulet. Fifteen minutes passed on without a whisper—then a low whistle from the thicket proclaimed the success of Koorbo the Adel, who had recovered the wounded beast, recumbent in the darkest recesses of the tamarisk grove. Advancing, with my rifle cocked, towards the spot where the red eyes gleamed through the gloom, I could perceive the white saliva streaming in bell-ropes from his mouth, whilst his breathing was hard and husky. Rising as I approached, he made a faint charge, but his strength was on the wane, and as he stumbled across a prostrate bough, a bullet through the heart brought him headlong to the earth.

The conquest of this noble beast, standing upwards of nineteen hands at the wither, would have afforded me pleasure under any circumstances, since I had never previously killed one of the same species; but there were other considerations which rendered its demolition subject for especial exultation. In spite of every existing disadvantage, the avowed object of our toilsome journey to the hot plains of the Adaïel had now been fully accomplished, to the delight and the amazement of my savage allies, whereas to have returned to the king without a trophy, after His Majesty's sage remarks upon the subject of buffalo-hunting, would, in the eyes of every one, have proved a blot on the escutcheon of the hitherto triumphant Gyptzis.

No sooner had the unwieldy monster fallen in its

last struggles, than Adam, the chief of the braves, having severed the windpipe with true Mohammadan skill, advanced at the head of his band, and falling prostrate on the ground, kissed my feet. To allay my thirst, a shield full of water was brought from the river. Every creese was then drawn, and the solid hide, after being removed with all expedition, was, for the convenience of carriage, divided into six portions suited for bucklers. Repeated blows from a heavy stone detached the great crescent horns from the beetling brow; and these, with the ears, hoofs, and tufted tail, we bore off as trophies to be laid at the royal footstool. Elated at the conquest of a formidable and much-dreaded beast, whose destruction by this rude people—a feat sometimes occupying many days—is esteemed equivalent to the slaughter of eight Pagans in battle, the excited savages were presently retracing their steps through the intricacies of the wilderness. Flourishing the spoils aloft in earnest of victory, they alternately whistled and chanted their wildest war-dirge, and the deep chorus raised at intervals made the recesses of the grove to ring again.

Awaiting my return with some anxiety, Ayto Habti Mariam, surrounded by his array of warriors, was seated beneath the spreading arms of a venerable acacia, which leaned in hoary pride over the bank of the bubbling Casam. Godána, the Adel brave, galloping wildly into the ring, vaulted from his rude saddle, and casting a sixth of the hide con-

temptuously upon the ground, declared the feat to be achieved! During the performance of the war-dance, by which his gaunt and sinewy frame was long violently convulsed, he sprang from side to side, quivering his spear with the most ferocious gestures, and chuckling in imitation of vultures revelling over their prey. His exhibition concluded, the other doughty heroes who had been present at the death, each in his turn, flung his trophy upon the earth; and the whole, with shouts, and yells, and war-whoops, accompanied by all manner of savage antics, triumphed over the spoils of the slain.

Greatly to our disappointment and surprise, the governor now intimated the necessity of our returning forthwith to the high country. The prolific covert teeming with game of every description, a respite of only one day was earnestly and repeatedly solicited, but in vain. The Amhára, who had embarked in the rash enterprise with the utmost reluctance, oppressed by the direct influence of the solar rays, and most anxious to terminate their sojourn on a perilous border, heretofore untrodden by Christian foot, with unanimous voice declared their provisions to be at an end; whilst the Adaïel, who still mistrusted the motive of the visit, and, now that the avowed object had been accomplished, would hear of no further tarry on their frontier, urged as an argument for instant departure, that the Ittoo "having heard the reports of the rifles, would not fail to be down in strength during the night."

Desultory hostilities are continually waged between these wild borderers, whose broils and feuds are endless; and not six months had passed away since five hundred Pagans, bursting over the frontier, had plundered the Moslem valleys. But the tocsin, resounding from village to village, was promptly responded to by the gathered population, who pursued the marauders—recovered all the booty wherewith they were laden—and left the bodies of one hundred and twenty a prey to the vultures of the air. Although a brave soldier, Habti Mariam was evidently apprehensive of a brawl in some quarter, and very unwilling to incur the responsibility. "You came," he repeated, "to hunt buffaloes; and by God's aid you have succeeded. My control extends not to these disturbed districts; and if blows should be struck, what account shall I render unto the king my lord?"

Further remonstrance being obviously useless, the Adaïel were assembled, and complimentary speeches having been delivered laudatory of their assistance, an Abyssinian cloth and a handful of German crowns were placed among them for division. Godána, on the part of his avaricious tribe, made an oration in reply; and waxing more and more animated as he drew towards the conclusion of the harangue, ended by praying in a loud voice, "that Allah might conduct the princely visiters in safety to their homes, and cause their spear-blades to prevail over every foe!—that the eyes of their

adversaries might be blinded in battle—that plenty might crown their harvests, and blood, as now, ever bedew their hunting trail!" And during the pause that followed the interpretation of each of these benedictions, the governor, with his assembled host, ejaculated "Amen!"

We had recrossed the Casam, and commenced the ascent of the hills, when the sudden appearance of a colony of pigfaced baboons, crowning the bank of the volcanic cleft, gave birth for some minutes to an apprehension amongst the Amhára, that the much-dreaded Ittoo were already hovering on the flank. But certain playful bounds on the part of the suspected objects soon dispelled the illusion; and the setting sun saw us safely encamped on a height overlooking a bend of the river, where a group of thermal springs issue from the sod-grown channel at a temperature of 150° Fahrenheit, and flow steaming on beneath a grove of odoriferous fan-palms. Celebrated for their sanative properties, these baths were speedily thronged by all who laboured under any real or imaginary ailment; and notwithstanding that they shrunk from the extreme heat, which threatened to scald a European finger, the immersion was perseveringly continued by a succession of patients so long as the daylight lasted.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

RETURN TO DUMMAKOO.

In the absence of a standing army, it is truly astonishing by what magic spell the inhabitants of these remote portions of His Majesty's dominions are bound to his rule. Owing to the difficulties inseparable from the introduction of an armed force for their chastisement, and the inaccessible nature of their fastnesses, no situation could be more favourable to revolt and to rebellion. But it is obvious that the wily policy of government will prove successful, so long as the fear of the Galla is strong in the breast both of Christian and Mohammadan, and so long as the name of Sáhela Selássie shall continue to act as a potent talisman upon all the savage, turbulent, and refractory spirits who people his disunited empire.

During the early portion of the night, the shrill crowing, as of an hundred cocks, might have induced the belief that the wild camp stood in the neighbourhood of Ankóber, where chanticleer taxes his throat almost incessantly; but the sound to which the wild hills now rung was soon ascertained to proceed from the Amhára pickets. With a view to compensate in some measure for the brief sojourn

conceded to us in the low country, we were hurried off the moment the morning star appeared, in order to beleaguer a field of reeds occupying the bed of the Casam. It was said by the governor to terminate in a *cul de sac*, and to be one great den of lions, no fewer than eight having fallen under the spears of the Adaïel in an attack made some years previously. Our path traversed the deep broken bed of the river, the lofty castellated walls of which, rising sternly in the moonlight, were garrisoned by a legion of baboons, and before dawn we halted on a sheet of bare rock, over which a small stream of water fell by a time-worn channel into a deep dark basin;—many hundred acres of tall waving flags, interspersed by shady tamarind trees, stretching away over the long reach beyond.

But the capabilities of the place proved to have been greatly exaggerated; and, although certainly harbouring a vast number of the *felinæ*, it was far too extensive and too tangled—too impervious to man, and too unassailable by fire—to admit even of a chance of success. An agazin and an oryx, of which numbers fled in all directions, were hunted down by the host of retainers, aided by their dogs. A feeble attempt was then made to dislodge the inmates of the wide covert, by a general screaming and clattering of shields on the outskirts; and this notable display of *venerie* being concluded without any good result, the cavalcade wended its way homeward.

Mounting on the left side, with the assistance of his spear, the Ambára, when in the saddle, does not by any means ride well. Frequent falls are precluded by the high bulwarks of wood and leather which fortify his position; but his seat is awkward and ungainly: and few cavaliers can be said to possess the noble science of equitation. Whilst violently kicking with the naked shanks, and retaining the stirrup in the grasp of the great toe, they tug violently at the cruel and barbarous bit to urge the horse to speed; and the blood is presently to be seen streaming from the mouth, as the tortured animal tosses its head in agony.

The bridle is especially powerful and severe; long cheeks being attached to an indented bit, whilst a solid iron ring embraces the lower jaw, and acts like a tightened curb. The saddle is of Tartar form, and consists of two light splinters, which leave a clear space for the spine, and connect a high wooden pommel for the suspension of the shield; with a cantle equally high. Firmly sewn together with wet thongs, the tree is padded, covered with a loose skin, and furnished with stirrup-rings, just sufficiently capacious to embrace the first toe of the shoeless equestrian.

The Abyssinian horse would in England be considered under-sized, and deficient in make and bone; but the breed is hardy, enduring, and sure-footed, and, from its cheapness, might with advantage be exported to our Indian possessions. Colts reared

among the Galla are deservedly held superior, the reckless character of the wild pagan rider impelling them over the most difficult ground, and thus imparting a degree of boldness and confidence which is rarely to be found in the Amhára steed. In Shoa the absence of roads precludes the use of wheeled carriages; and established custom forbidding the employment of the team in agriculture, the gelding is reserved exclusively for the saddle, whilst mares and stallions are very rarely ridden. The art of shoeing is unknown, and no attention is paid to the care of the hoof, which, being extremely hard, for a time bids defiance to the stony ground; but many of our hunters were already beginning to suffer from the want of a farrier.

The horse is by all considered a very inferior animal to the mule, whose soft agreeable pace accords much better with the general indolent habits of the Abyssinian, and whose patience and surety of foot among the steep rocky mountains are sufficiently appreciated. The prices given are consequently larger, and the care taken of the latter is proportionably greater. Whilst the steed, scantily supplied with old straw, runs in the pasture during every season of the year, the mule, on the failure of the herbage, is pampered on barley and on the best of teff fodder, and, sheltered from the cold bleak wind, remains a constant inmate of the master's dwelling, on terms of close intimacy with the family.

Twenty-five or thirty miles within the day are

rarely exceeded—the high hills to be ascended, and the deep rugged valleys to be traversed, rendering a longer stage almost impracticable. The usual pace of the sure-footed mule is three miles an hour, but when the road is level, the amble is increased to five, and the pedestrians of the party still continue to retain their place. A saddled steed is led in the train; and, excepting in the hereditary dominions of Shoa, the traveller is fain to keep a good look-out for the roving Galla, and to do battle on the moment, if occasion requires.

On again reaching the gorge of the Fótah river, the governor, surrounded by the most puissant of his chivalry, and preceded by a band of bold spearmen, each decorated with some flaunting trophy of the chase, advanced with a measured war-dance, and a martial chorus. These triumphant strains were continued with little intermission during the whole of the steep ascent, in spite of the intense heat of the sun, which shot forth with greater fervour than ever. Dense clouds of dust and sand, such as might be raised by a charge of ten thousand cavalry, whirled up towards the sultry sky from the scene of recent exploits; and the Amhára, already fanned by the cooler breeze of the highlands, looked down upon the execrated plain with joy at their deliverance from its burning atmosphere. From each hamlet along the route the inhabitants sallied forth with shrill acclamations to greet our return. The entire female population of Dummakoo, re-

ceiving the white strangers near the church dedicated to the tutelar saint of England, led the way with kettle-drums and shouts of welcome; and for many hours after arrival within the dark walls of the king's granary, every quarter of the village resounded with choral music.

A visit of congratulation was immediately paid to us by a diminutive gentleman, who boasted descent in a direct line from the celebrated Graan, and whose more immediate ancestors possessed the vicegerency of the greater part of the country just visited. Ali Qui occupied a farm in the vicinity of Dummakoo, and he was accompanied by his tall, fair, dark-eyed daughter, clothed in crimson, and loaded with amulets and amber necklaces. Possessing the Abyssinian accomplishment of begging in the very highest perfection, the worthy Moslem presented a jar of milk, and requested the loan of a few hundred dollars to pay for his estate, whilst the coquettish damsel brought a loaf of bread, and exerted her powers of eloquence to bring about an application to the throne for the restoration of her parent to his hereditary dignities. She was known by the eccentric appellation of *Amesa Karetse*, or "fifty crowns"—a title bestowed in commemoration of a fine to that amount levied on the day of her nativity upon Ali Qui, as a punishment for the escape of a state prisoner consigned to his custody.

The easy and ingenious mode of extortion by *mamúlacha* exists in full force throughout the land.

and all are equally amenable both to its abuses and to its privileges. Bringing any article within his means, no matter what, the begging petitioner hands it over to his superior as a memento for any thing that he has the assurance to demand. Servants offer a stick or a bundle of grass, and ask for swords, clothes, and money; whilst chiefs and the highest officers of state, present to the throne a pot of butter or a cloth, and seek to receive in return a horse, or a mule, or an embroidered garment. If the *mamálacha* be received, the case is hopeless; and indeed the custom of the country requires that the extortioner should be never met with a negative. Thus, on the occasion of loss by fire or other casualty, the sufferer makes the round of his acquaintance, who each contribute a mite to the subscription; and wonderful license being given to imposture, the individual upon whom fortune has laid a heavy hand, soon waxes more wealthy than before.

No petitioner ever enters the presence of his superior unless furnished with an offering according to his worldly means, as a bribe to secure favour and good-will. Cattle and honey, cloth, wood, and even stones, are presented; and this system is invariably observed in all quarrels and dissensions, where either party desires reconciliation. Without the intervention of a mediator, this cannot be effected. A third individual is therefore sought, who will undertake the arrangement, and to his hands the affair is consigned. The king himself often accepts

the office, and of course is very rarely unsuccessful. Inferiors come into the presence of their official master with large stones upon their heads; and, prostrating themselves upon the earth, seek forgiveness of their offences, which, at the intercession of the all-powerful mediator, is seldom withheld. The oath by His Majesty's life is the most potent in use. If adjured by the death of Sáhela Selássie, non-compliance can be visited by punishment; and the wilful breach of the solemn obligation renders the perjured party liable to penalties the most severe.

From the highest to the lowest, all classes are most pertinacious beggars. Whatsoever is seen is surely demanded,—guns, knives, scissors, beads, cloth, mirrors, and dollars. The love of acquiring property stifles every sense of shame; and no compunction is felt in asking for the cloak from off the stranger's back. The Amhára even take a pride in this national failing, and boast that the child, before coming into the world, will stretch forth its hand to receive a gift; whilst tradition extols as highly praiseworthy and deserving of imitation the conduct of a certain great Abyssinian chief, who on his death-bed desired that his body might be interred in the track of a caravan, in order that, if possible, his spirit might be in the way of receiving a dole from the passing merchant!

CHAPTER XXIX.

VISIT TO THE KARAIYO GALLA.

As each evening closed, the appearance over the high range of Bulga was magnificent. Dark clouds, occasionally pierced by a bright ray of the sinking sun, drove in dense volumes across this mountain wall; and as they rolled on towards the lofty cone of Megásus, they revealed in their track the precipitous and rugged nature of bluffs which had before presented an unbroken surface. Rain not unfrequently fell during the night, and penetrating the flimsy cotton awnings as if they had been cullenders, rendered an umbrella necessary towards the protection of the damp pillow.

Resolved to view the mysterious Fantáli from the country of the Karaiyo Galla, whence might be determined the interesting question of its activity or quiescence, I planned an excursion with Captain Graham to the lake Muttahára, whose glassy bosom, surrounded by great belts of yellow grass, and stretching along the western base of the volcano, we had regarded with intense curiosity, as it sparkled under the beams of the setting sun. Absence of water on the road rendered it imperative that our

party should be limited; and the insuperable aversion displayed by every follower to a second expedition to the low country caused little disappointment. Many had already suffered severely from inflammation of the eyes; and greater difficulty could hardly have been experienced in obtaining volunteers for the most desperate forlorn hope—the Aroosi beyond the Háwash, a tribe distinguished for surpassing ferocity, being declared the bitter enemy of every Christian and Mohammadan.

The governor had already proceeded in advance, to collect his vassals; and on the morning fixed for our departure a heavy white fog, such as is wont to envelope the capital of Shoa during three-quarters of the year, veiled the entire face of nature. The first five miles led across the richly-cultivated terrace of Berhut, amid numerous hamlets which gradually became visible as the mist ascended. Aingodiyé, on the top of the pass, together with the entire district of that denomination, pertains to the Lady Asagásh, who, decked in her holiday costume, politely sallied forth, with her train of household slaves and handmaidens, to greet the passing strangers.

This portly dame, whose appearance is truly indicative of her wealth, was the favourite concubine of the famous Medóko at the period of his assassination; and having been suffered by the despot to retain the extensive domains conferred upon her paramour during the days of his glory, a thrifty

disposition has swelled her hoard of corn, oil, and beeves, beyond all bounds. In her retinue came a disconsolate couple chained together by the wrists —thieves no doubt—and said to be man and wife, whom the Woïzoro facetiously declared it had been found requisite to link by bonds stronger than those of wedlock, in order to counteract a decided disinclination to the society of the husband, evinced by the inconstant spouse in three several elopements.

Descending by a steep pass through the district of Gooroouréza — a perfect wilderness of rugged mountains—we crossed the river of that name near its junction with the Casam, and shortly afterwards the Casam itself, from which all the villages for many miles round derive their supply of water. Taking its source in the elevated plains of Germáma, this tributary of the Háwash escapes through the mountains by a deep defile, worn in the lapse of ages by the autumnal torrents, betwixt Mentshar and Bulga. Thence it winds on beneath perpendicular bluffs jutting out from the high table-land. Of these the principal is the frowning promontory of Gougou, which, like a natural fortress, abruptly terminates the Tudla Mariam plateau, extending to Angollála in one uninterrupted terrace, celebrated for the capsicums and fine cotton wool raised by its Christian population.

From the bed of the Casam the road wound up the Choba ravine, through a fissure formed near

the point of junction by two gigantic blocks of granite, which confine the rugged defile to just sufficient width for the transit of a mule. The stupendous mass wore the appearance of having been hurled in remote ages from the summit of the impending cliff, the force of the concussion rending it in twain, and forming the key to a road, which by a handful of resolute men might be defended against the mightiest host. An ascent of one thousand feet over the Woleecha mountain, by a narrow path worn in the columnar trap, led to another elevated plateau, where, after the arrival of the governor, the staff was set up for the night at the Moslem village of Seeágur, eleven miles from Dummakoo.

The threshing-floor whereon our tent was erected, standing upon one of the many tongues of table-land that intersect the district of Wolágur, looked down a long lone valley bounded on the opposite side by the perpendicular wall of Boorkikee, upon the verge of which, surrounded by a milk-bush hedge, rose the secluded church of St. George, the last Christian edifice of Mentshar. The sudden termination of the terrace, which abruptly drops into the country of the Galla, commanded an extensive prospect over the wilderness of Táboo, bounded by the distant blue hills of the Gámoo and Aroosi. Rising among the Sáma Galla, and overflowing the level land in the season of its height, the Táboo, like most of the secondary

streams in this district, is dissipated by the fiery heat of the plains before reaching the Háwash.

Double the number of retainers, both horse and foot, to that which actually appeared on the morrow, had been summoned; but many preferred paying the fine incurred by absence, to accompanying their liege lord into jungles hitherto little trodden by the Christian. A respectable retinue was, however, in attendance; and we set out at an early hour for the lake Muttahára. A rugged winding descent, due south, led to the foot of the Wolágur range, whence an extensive tract stretches away to Fantáli, beautifully wooded, covered with flocks and herds, and disclosing in every direction the bee-hive cabins of the Karaiyo, a tribe equally rich in cattle and in pasture land.

It is now fifteen years since an Amhára expedition under the Dech Agafári overran this then independent district from the highlands of Mentshar. The inhabitants, flying for shelter to their thick hook-thorn coverts, sustained little loss in killed; but the whole of their wealth was swept away, and thirty thousand fat beeves were presented to the monarch on the plains of Angollála, as an earnest of successful foray. Since that period the Karaiyo have been nominally dependent on Shoa, paying an annual tribute of twenty oxen, and the left tooth of every elephant entrapped or found dead—a mild taxation, with which they are sufficiently content to abstain from revolt, although the hold over

them is too slight to admit of further impost—the principal advantage derived from their submission being the interposition of a barrier against the inroads upon the Amhára frontier of the savage Aroosi.

The Karaiyo territory, extending about forty miles in length by thirty in breadth, consists of a succession of open uncultivated plains, covered with luxuriant shade, and intersected by low ranges of grassy hills, dotted with spreading trees—altogether a highly enviable site for a small nomade tribe, although much scourged by the neighbouring Aroosi, and presenting the very theatre for a hasty inroad. Portions of the district often suffer much from drought; but a most opportune fall of rain the preceding night had completely deluged the country, and poured into every pool along the route a plentiful supply of muddy water.

Taking an easterly direction towards Fantáli, we passed numerous well-peopled hamlets, occupying all the secluded nooks, and as wealthy in flocks and herds as if the Amhára besom had never swept the land. From constant exposure to the heat and glare, and the habit of closing the eyelid to increase the power of vision, the swarthy features of even the youngest of the blinking inhabitants were deeply furrowed with premature wrinkles, which, with a turn-up nose, and the greasy unbecoming Galla costume, rendered those who had numbered many seasons, truly hideous.

In an easterly direction the course was bounded by the great isolated crater of Sáboo, yawning in the very centre of a well populated plain, and said to have been in full activity in the time of Sáhela Selássie's grandsire, who reigned only thirty years ago; an assertion which was fully borne out by the recent appearance of the lava streams. The long-horned oryx, with great herds of antelope, grazed around every pool—the latter little disturbed by the presence of those who tended the flocks of sheep and goats, and whose groups of circular wigwams peeped forth in every sequestered corner.

An ancient crone of surpassing ugliness, attired in a leathern petticoat flounced with cowry shells, was busily engaged by the way-side in transferring muddy water to her scrip, and looking up, was perfectly horrified at the appearance of a white face on the opposite border of the puddle. For a few seconds her old yellow teeth chattered audibly, and then, satisfied that there was no deception, she called loudly upon the goddess Atéti, threw herself back upon the ground, and became a prey to abject despair.

Resuming a southerly course from the foot of the crater, our path led at right angles over a tract where broken abysses, lava dykes, and brilliant belts of verdure, were jumbled together in strange confusion. At an early hour in the afternoon we reached Inkóftoo, the principal Karaiyo kraal in

the district of Kadécha Dima. Standing beside an extensive pool, screened on all sides by luxuriant trees, it was strongly fortified by stiff thorn-branches against the inroads of the lion; formidable troops of which, roaming almost unmolested, commit great havoc among the cattle, and had only the night before carried off a youth belonging to the village.

It wanted still some miles of the spot in which Habti Mariam had resolved to encamp, near the borders of the Muttahára lake, whose placid surface, not less than two miles across, extended almost to the base of Fantáli. The chief of Inkóftoo had seen a rhinoceros in the morning, among the dense thicket of hook-thorns covering the declivity of a hill on the way; but although one of the governor's braves, elevating his sheep-skin mantle upon the point of his lance, charged the assembled multitude in the king's name to abstain from clamour and from interference with the arrangements made for beating up the quarters of the "*ouráris*," the clattering hoofs of the advancing cavalcade presently put the animal to flight towards the Háwash. It were difficult to determine whether the fear of the Aroosi or of wild beasts now predominated in the minds of our Amhára escort. In spite of a heavy fall of rain, large watch-fires were kindled in various parts of the lone bivouac, and not a single eye was closed until the day had fairly dawned.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE WILDERNESS OF TÁBOO.

EXTENSIVE morasses, environing the sedge-grown borders of the Muttahára water, proved it to be far below its wonted boundaries, and precluded all access to Fantáli, even had the timidity of the guides been sufficiently overcome to induce them to acquiesce in a visit; but the non-existence of any active volcano for more than thirty years was confirmed by all. The Kobedémtoo and the Gobakoobee districts form the limit of His Majesty's Karaiyo possessions, within a few miles of the Háwash, and thither we proceeded in the morning. Arriving near the mountain Sadéka, one of the outposts of the Aroosi, whence the wooded line of the river could be traced for miles through the naked plains, I took the bearings of the conical peak of Serie, and of other conspicuous landmarks. But the appearance of a small party of armed savages in the distance soon induced precipitate retreat on the part of our escort, who by no means relished the delay. A band of treacherous barbarians had only a few weeks previously made a descent upon the Karaiyo cattle, and after putting all

the herdsmen to the spear, were hurrying off with the booty, when they were pursued in force, and put to flight with the loss of twelve of their number. Another predatory visit was daily anticipated; and the caution was in every mouth, "If two warriors be perceived upon the same horse, ask no questions, but shoot them without mercy."

Sáhela Selássie has never yet attempted an expedition in person against these war-hawks, nestled in the lap of the mountains, who fight stark naked, and are besmeared with lard from head to foot. Merciless, and of predatory habits, they are represented as extremely powerful in battle, and are the terror of every surrounding tribe—two warriors usually bestriding the same steed, and aiding each other with barbed lances jagged like the teeth of a saw, and with bucklers manufactured to imitate the shell of the tortoise. Subsisting entirely by plunder, the cultivation of their high cold hills is but little attended to; salt, which forms the principal article of barter with Gurágué, and other inland bordering countries, being obtainable in unlimited quantities from the lake Lághi, two days' journey from Serie, one of the principal market towns. Noora Hoossain is the capital of the Aroosi Galla, who are all followers of the Prophet; and the principal towns of their adjacent neighbours the Ittoo, a race of mixed Mohammadans and Pagans, are Chercha and Metokóma.

The rhinoceros was said to abound in the Karaiyo

neighbourhood; but Habti Mariam would consent to no further sojourn on this dangerous border with so limited an escort, and at noon retraced his steps to the village of Inkóftoo. Here all the braves and principal men of the tribe were gathered to recount their recent exploits with the predatory Aroosi, as well as the particulars attending the slaughter of an elephant's calf that had fallen under their united lances a few weeks previously. A spear wound having stupified the beast, hundreds of warriors rushed in and overwhelmed it. Every participator in this notable achievement, which is one of extremely rare occurrence, now displayed on his person some distinguishing ornament or feather, whilst the doughty hero who claimed first blood, strutted about under a perfect load of sable and green plumes, brass chains, and massive ivory armlets, precisely similar to those worn by the ancient Egyptians. Not quite satisfied as to the object of the visit, the Karaiyo had collected the whole of their great droves of cattle in the precincts of the hamlet. Amongst them were many splendid *sánga*, with wide-spreading horns upwards of six feet in length; under which they moved as majestically as the stag "proud of his twelve tynes."

A heavy storm of dust obscured the entire face of the landscape in the direction of Sáboo; arriving near to which, a path struck off to the westward to the encamping ground on the side of the Kózi mountain, above a snug Karaiyo hamlet, whence

provisions were obtained. The Amhára followers, although still restricted by the fast of Hodádi from participation in animal food, were fain to encase their naked and blistered feet in portions of the hide of an ox slaughtered for the entertainment of the more fortunate Mohammadans; the fields of lava lately traversed, like the "iron stones" celebrated in the travels of the Jesuit fathers of old, being "like the dross that cometh from the furnace, and so sharp-pointed withal, that they spoiled a pair of new shoes in a day."

The next object was to visit the far-famed volcanic well of Boorchútta, on the frontier of Mentshar, bordering upon the wilderness of Táboo, which was to form the limit of our wanderings. Shortly after gaining the summit of the Kózi mountain, the road wound along the very brink of the crater of Winzégoor, from whose monstrous chasm the entire adjacent country has been recently overflowed; and three miles beyond it we halted preparatory to the passage of a dangerous defile, said to teem with the execrated Aroosi hordes, and to form their favourite ambuscade. A council of war was held. The troops being formed into a dense body, a *wobo* was appointed to prevent straggling, and to command the rear-guard. Scouts proceeded in advance to reconnoitre, and the strictest silence having been enjoined, the order was for once obeyed. Dismounted men and grazing horses descried on the impending heights of Boobisa soon caused dire

alarm; and consternation reached the climax when, on gaining the gorge of the hills overlooking the wilderness of Táboo, the scouts ran in breathless, with intelligence that a large body of cavalry occupied a rising ground not two miles from the van. The jingling bells around the necks of the mules having been muffled, the party, drawn up in battle array, advanced with the utmost caution, until the gleaming of the white garments and cross-emblazoned shields of the fancied foes proved them to be none other than the Mentshar detachment of horse under Ayto Nigdoo, who had been expressly called out to reinforce the Amhára in event of the Aroosi being abroad on a foray.

Having joined the allies, who had in their turn been equally disconcerted at the appearance of the forces of Habti Mariam, we proceeded to cross the valley of Jiggra Mulkinia, "the place where the guinea fowls feed." This fine level plain, hemmed in by high hills, presented a perfect garden of wild flowers blossoming amid a most luxuriant second crop of grass, the result of a late conflagration. Many hundreds of the white-rumped *mhorr* browsed on it undisturbed, and the pintado and the partridge seemed to be without end. A belt of dog-rose bushes, camel-thorns, and a highly aromatic undergrowth which bordered the base of the range styled Jújjuba Kulla, harboured a small herd of elephants, and they were soon perceived luxuriating among the young juicy reeds. But the retinue contrived as

usual to put the whole to flight; and under a furious thunder-storm, which in ten minutes covered the plain with pools of water, the cavalcade, drenched to the skin, arrived at a late hour on the skirts of the Boorchútta water, where the night was to be passed.

This singular well, which wears the semblance of the crater of a gigantic mine, is situated in the bosom of the almost perpendicular mountain of Jújjuba Kulla. One narrow passage, of barely sufficient width for an elephant, leads to the water, which lies at the bottom of a deep narrow gully with inaccessible banks. Rising to the height of two hundred feet, they are crossed by vermilion bands of lava, honeycombed with a thousand cavities and fissures, and overgrown in parts with the most brilliant vegetation. Enormous blocks of black rock, which choke this channel for the last hundred yards, form a sort of parapet to the front of the pool, which measures sixty feet in diameter, and gives "no bottom." The still, brimstone-coloured waters were glassy smooth, and not a breath stirred within the deep suffocating crater, where the fall of a pin produced an echo like that of a whispering gallery. Black martins wheeled over head—pigeons cooed amid the clefts and crannies—and hairy baboons grimaced and chattered on the impending cliffs, from which trailed numberless fantastic roots, laid bare by the torrent that at certain seasons pours into the well from the ravine above.

There being no other water for many miles

around this reservoir, it forms the resort of all the numerous wild animals in the neighbourhood; and the narrow passage bore ample testimony to the nocturnal visits of the elephant and rhinoceros. The inhabitants of all the adjacent hamlets deriving their supply hence, the Aroosi frequently lay in ambush to cut off their watering parties. Boorchútta is, in fact, the arena of constant conflicts; and not a month had elapsed since the ruthless barbarians slaughtered thirty-three Moslems, losing four of their own number in the skirmish. Bowers of green boughs were constructed for the accommodation of the two governors; and the whole of the retainers, standing to their arms with loins girt, danced and sang throughout the night around blazing watch-fires, which threw great masses of light into the shadowy abyss, and imparted the wildest effect to the scene of blood.

The night passed without any alarm, whether from assassin or wild beast; and in order to complete the tour of the eastern frontier, an excursion was made at early dawn through the wilderness of Táboo to the Bósut hills; the rich meadows which intervene, being tenanted by the Gámoo Galla, a pastoral tribe, beyond whom are the rebel Loomi. On terms of friendship with Sáhela Selássie, and even acknowledging a sort of nominal fealty to Shoa, we did not anticipate that our appearance would have caused alarm; but the natives believing the party of five hundred horse and foot to denote

an irruption of the Aroosi, drove off their cattle with all expedition to the summits of the fastnesses, and abandoning their villages, were to be seen clustering on the heights in momentary expectation of attack. Nothing could exceed the luxuriance of the shady forests of Táboo, which bore evidences throughout of the presence of the elephant, and abounded in the pie-bald oryx, the agazin, the hartebeest, and the mhorr—clamorous troops of guinea-fowl, which covered every open glade, completing the contrast to the silent regions of Shoa, so generally destitute of animal life.

Several splendid antelope had fallen to Graham's rifle and my own, before the impatient entreaties of the governor compelled us to set out on our return. We arrived before sunset at the village of Adeláda, which occupies the summit of a steep saddle-backed hill, and is under the control of Ayto Nigdoo. Near it is the well of Wuláwula, which, although smaller, is not very dissimilar from that of Boorchútta, a sleepy, funnel-shaped hollow, likewise owing its existence to igneous agency. Crossing the Koorkurú, the Gubraiyo Ságur, and the Cosso rivulets, which are severally dissipated in the plain of the Karaiyo, we re-ascended to Wolágur, and returned the following day to Dummakoo, laden with numerous valuable accessions to natural history, and in possession of as much information as our opportunities enabled us to collect relative to this interesting but unsettled border.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE KINGDOM OF SHOA.

" Natura beatis
Omnibus esse dedit, si quis cognoverit uti."

ALTHOUGH the majestic fabrics, the pillars of porphyry, and the Corinthian domes of early writers, now exist only in the tradition, Æthiopia yet retains the fresh vegetation of a northern soil, the vivifying ardour of a tropical sun, and the cloudless azure of a southern sky. Palaces and fanes, gardens and gushing fountains, have long since departed; but there still remains a fertile country possessing vast capabilities, a salubrious and delightful climate, and a race of beings whose existence under absolute and complete despotism, presents a striking contrast to that of the idle and improvident Adaïel, whose pride and whose boast is a banner of independence.

Whatever Abyssinia may once have been, it is not to be expected that she should, under a great lapse of time, again take place among those countries which are peculiarly happy, opulent, or abundant. All her prevailing customs and practices are utterly at variance with existing laws for the creation, consumption, and distribution of wealth. A heavy taxation is levied on the produce of the

field. Monastic and clerical establishments are fostered to the ruin of the people. The venal judges are paid by fees on the suits which they decide; and popular superstition and imposture possess the royal sanction for abuse. Nothing useful is ever taken into consideration; here are no roads or bridges to facilitate traffic, no schools for the instruction of the rising generation. The improvements of life have stopped at the satisfying point

"of barren, bare necessity;"

and fear and prejudice unite to deter the inhabitants from visiting foreign climes, so as to improve their benighted country, by introducing the discoveries in modern science.

But although thus ignorant of comfort even in their highest enjoyments, the people are yet considerably emerged from that state of society which is denominated barbarian, and practise a species of agriculture which the fertility of the soil has heretofore blessed with an abundant return. Throughout the kingdom the eye is greeted by extensive cultivation; and the art of husbandry in Shoa has far eclipsed the advances made by any nation hitherto visited on the western coast. Under certain despotic conditions, private property in the land is every where established. There are few forests or wastes, excepting those impracticable for pasture or cultivation. The village and the farm-steading are uniformly secure from predatory bands or hostile

neighbours, and although thickly inhabited, the country is unburdened by any over-population.

The processes of preparing the ground are somewhat complex; a primitive plough is in use to the exclusion of the African hoe, and considerable industry is evinced in collecting and distributing the waters for artificial irrigation. The science of husbandry is nevertheless little understood; the implements of culture are few, and of the rudest construction; the various modes of assisting nature are unknown; and unless some civilized power interferes for good, a great length of time must necessarily elapse before the habits and prejudices of the uncultivated nation can be overcome for its own advantage.

Situated in the middle of the torrid zone, and composed of groups and ranges of lofty mountains overlooking wide plains and deep valleys, equally under the influence of the tropical rains, the climate at different elevations is of the most varied description. The high table land, which is clothed with moderate vegetation, and destitute of wood, is at all times cool and healthy, and often extremely cold. Here there is no winter,

> "such as when birds die
> In the deep forest, and the fishes lie
> Stiffened in the translucent ice."

The coolness of the mountain breeze is pleasant and refreshing, and the timely cessation of the rain allows a healthful rest to vegetation.

The low wooded valleys, on the other hand, are close, unwholesome, and insufferably hot. During the cold season the thermometer on the summit of the range stands at about 30°, a thin coating of ice covers the pools, and the country is white under a mantle of hoar frost. Below, the quicksilver mounts to 90°, and the total absence of ventilation renders the heat still more oppressive. At the termination of the rains, Fever, with all her attendant horrors, spreads her pestilential wings over the most beautiful locations; and during the month of September even the wild birds for a time forsake the poisoned atmosphere, to seek the more congenial breezes of the upper regions.

The amazing fertility of the vales is beyond all conception. Every species of crop attains the most gigantic proportions. The rich soil and the nurturing shelter, the abundant supply of water, and the ardent rays of the sun, all combine to crown the hopes of the husbandman; and these situations would have stood prominent as perfect in the creation, had nature blessed them with a climate corresponding in character to their lovely appearance. On the mountain-side, the vegetation is somewhat inferior in luxuriance—a fact that may be accounted for by the angle at which the sun's rays meet the ground, their power of imparting heat varying in proportion. As the eastern face of the range rises almost perpendicularly, it can only during half the day receive them at all, and for many hours in the

warmest part of the afternoon, it is thus entirely in the shade.

Or the elevated plateau, a succession of well-watered undulations of pasture and arable land, extend in endless continuation to the view, undisturbed by a solitary tree, their scattered villages and farm houses proclaiming a country which has long enjoyed the blessings of peace. From the centre of this table-land, the craggy mountains rise in magnificent ranges, clothed in part with majestic forests, and graced by the wild rose, the myrtle, the eglantine, and the jessamine; whilst at its foot repose the rich and smiling valleys, hid in all the luxuriance of tropical foliage, from the gigantic sycamore, beloved of the heathen Galla, and measuring upwards of forty feet in circumference, to the light and elegant acacia, which distils the much-prized gum.

On the table-land the best soil is found on the sheltered hill-side, of a rich brown colour, and along the river bank where there is a loamy alluvial deposit. Black earth is occasionally met with on the mountains, where it may probably have originated in the decomposition of those forests to which tradition gives existence in ancient days, but of which no other vestige now remains. In the valleys, those which form the governments of Giddem and Geshé especially, the richest black soil prevails throughout; and blessed with an abundant supply of rain, and with a mild genial climate, they produce all the crops known in Abyssinia, whilst the soil on the

surrounding mountain-side, light, loose, and gravelly, would be found well adapted for the growth of coffee and tea.

Abyssinia is happy in a most copious supply of water, the gates of heaven being opened twice during the year to the flooding of every river and streamlet, and to the complete soaking of the earth. The "rain of bounty" commences in February, and lasts for thirty days, and the "rain of covenant" setting in before the termination of June, pours down with extreme violence throughout July, August, and September—at which period is produced that never-failing increase of the Nile to which Egypt is also indebted for her fertility. Immediately after these down-pourings, nature, who had remained bound up in the preceding drought, bursts forth into a thousand interesting forms. Pastures and meadows are clothed in cheering green; the hills and dales are adorned with myriads of beautiful and sweet-scented flowers, and the sides of the mountain ranges become one sheet of the most luxuriant cultivation.

Long after the rains are over, a heavy dew falls during the night; and under its vivifying influence the plants continue to shoot forth, refreshed by the coolness of the morning breeze, and strengthened by the strong heat of the mid-day sun. By the provident husbandman two crops are every year garnered in, without the land being impoverished; and whilst the corn is being reaped in

one field, the seed is but just sown in another. The cattle are employed in ploughing up the fertile soil of one estate, whilst in the next the muzzled ox is trampling out its recently yielded treasures; and all the various operations of husbandry, from the breaking up of the ground to the final winnowing of the corn, may be simultaneously witnessed on one and the same farm.

> "Hic ver assiduum, atque alienis mensibus æstas,
> Bis gravidæ pecudes, bis pomis utilis arbor."

Forty-three species of grain and other useful products are already cultivated in Abyssinia. After supplying the immediate wants of the working classes, and those of a herd of clerical drones who devour the fruits of their honest labour, there remains a considerable surplus, which is bartered to the lazy Adaïel for the produce of his salt lake—a field that without ploughing or sowing yields an inestimable crop. But if only a small portion of European knowledge were to be instilled into the mind of the Christian cultivator, the kingdom of Shoa, possessed of such unbounded natural advantages, might be rapidly raised from its present condition, and made one inexhaustible granary for all the best fruits of the earth.

CHAPTER XXXII.

TERMINATION OF THE FAST OF LENT.

IMMEDIATELY upon our return from the eastern frontier, the king sent his confidential page with a message of congratulation on my recent success against the much-dreaded buffalo, and requested that we would visit him early the ensuing morning. In accordance with the etiquette invariably observed after a long absence, I laid "pleasing things" on the royal footstool, together with the trophies of the chase, and His Majesty listened with great interest to a detail of our adventures among his Adel subjects. On my returning thanks for the injunctions issued to the governor of Berhut and his subordinates, as well as for the royal permission to visit a portion of the realm hitherto unviewed by Europeans, the most friendly assurances were repeated, that "he could not suffer his children to depart until they should have viewed the entire of his dominions."

During this interview, His Majesty remained seated on a hassock before the fire, and had laid aside every portion of his usual reserve. *Akoddámas*, or silver coronets, with chain pendants, of the model worn by himself on occasions of triumph, and con-

ferred as the last honour upon those who distinguish themselves in war or in the chase, were now presented to us, together with massive silver bracelets, accompanied by many complimentary speeches upon the issue of the expedition :—"You have slain elephants and buffaloes, and are powerful in arms against the wild beasts of which my people are afraid," concluded the despot. "You have overwhelmed me with rifles and other delightful inventions from the countries beyond the great sea, and must receive at my hands those things which my kingdom produces, in order that they may be worn on all proper occasions. You are my brothers."

Striped cotton robes of Abyssinian manufacture followed; and three horses with plated silver bridles were subsequently presented, which, although like other royal gifts in Shoa, of ridiculously inferior quality, were valuable as tokens of favour that are lavished upon those alone who enjoy the most exalted place in His Majesty's estimation. They did not fail to produce the desired effect upon popular opinion; and sycophants who had before taxed us with an intention to seize the throne—to extinguish the race of Solomon, and to bring a curse upon the land by the atrocious process of burning the royal bread—now found it convenient to alter their sentiments, and to confer upon the foreign guests the ennobling, but not very enviable, appellation of "the king's brothers."

The tedious fast of Hodádi, which for forty days

had been observed in commemoration of Lent by every individual of the population whose age exceeded thirteen years, was now about to terminate. During the three days which are termed *kenóna*, the priests had neither eaten bread nor drunk water, but had remained in the churches singing and praying incessantly both day and night. In accordance with the practice of the primitive Church, the monarch observed total abstinence throughout this period, and on Good Friday sent me a message, "that his people would eat nothing for forty hours, but that as he knew the Gypts did not keep strong fasts, he had commanded the purveyor-general to send to the residency the usual daily supplies of bread, beer, and hydromel."

On Easter even we were invited to the palace to witness their celebration of the royal victories, held according to immemorial custom during Passion Week. Sáhela Selássie was clad in the plainest of garments, and appeared much enfeebled and emaciated by rigorous mortification, but was in high spirits at the prospect of speedy release from the irksome penance. On this joyful occasion offerings are invariably made to the throne; and every individual of the crowd present, whether great or small, advancing in turn, contributed a mite according to his means—the wealthier bringing cotton cloths, and the more indigent, logs of wood, earthen jars, or stones of a description fitted for building.

Bands of warriors next entered the carpeted court-

yard, howling the war-chorus; and after the lapse of a few seconds, the gigantic Tunkaiye, who had earned new laurels, and been severely wounded during a recent foray against the Gentiles, dashed into the arena on horseback. Richly attired, bedizened with feathers, *sarétis*, and silver decorations, and escorted by a troop of fifty mounted retainers, he galloped up and down, recounting his valorous exploits, and pointing to the scars earned in the service of his royal master, shouted defiance to the enemies of the state.

Eighty turbaned priests, in solemn procession, next entered the court, clad in their sacerdotal vestments. Preceded by the great embroidered umbrellas of the church dedicated to St. George, they filed slowly into the space vacated by the warriors, the holy ark being supported by antique Egyptian figures, robed in long musty-looking habiliments of chequered hues, crowned with heavy mitres, and bearing in their hands rods of green rushes, bronze bells, crosses, and censers of burning incense, with an image of the Madonna, and a crucifix; for whilst hating the Papists with all their hearts, the Abyssinians nevertheless cherish many of the superstitions and buffooneries of the church of Rome.

Having formed a semicircle before the throne, the priests, although much exhausted by their long abstinence, continued, during half an hour, to dance and chant the words of the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Romans, "Christ was delivered for

our offences, and raised again for our justification." A portion of the Dominical orison followed. Their united harsh voices were accompanied by the music of tambourines and kettle-drums, thumped with excessive violence, and by the jingle of the *tsnasin*, the Abyssinian timbrel. This is the *sistrum*, an instrument supposed to be included under the Hebrew term *tzitzelem*, and being composed of a frame and moveable bars of sonorous metal, it produces sounds which can best be compared to the rattle of the poker upon the tongs.

Seven long years are passed in learning to play these instruments, which are ascribed to Saint Yareed, an Abuna under the Emperor Guebra Máskal[1], and the reputed inventor of church music in all its various branches. The constant practice of many hours during each day might not unreasonably be expected to lead to greater perfection than is displayed. From four in the morning until nine, in every church in the kingdom, a similar clatter and noise is maintained, for the honour of the Christian religion, not only on the Sabbath, but on all the numerous holydays and festivals throughout the twelve months. Howling and screaming are the most appropriate terms by which to express the hoarse muster of cracked and ill-modulated voices; and the band of stout priests who, by their song, nightly preserve the royal person from the influence

[1] i. e. "Servant of the Cross."

of evil demons, must be acknowledged to have selected a right cunning stratagem by which to deter the approach of those spirits, at least, that are gifted with any musical taste.

The rehearsal of the praises and martial achievements of the reigning sovereign occupied another half hour, during which the dancing was even more energetic, and the music more boisterous than ever. Taking their seats before the throne, the priests of St. George, fairly worn out by their exertions, at length made way for those of "our Lady," who, after the enaction of similar absurdities, were followed in succession by those of Medhanálem, Aferbeine, and St. Michael, the latter distinguished by the massive embossed silver umbrella. As the united body rent the air with renewed encomiums on the royal prowess in arms, dictated to them line by line by one of the Alakas, His Majesty enquired of me whether similar ceremonies were performed before the sovereigns of Egypt during the holy institution of Lent?—whether the Coptic priesthood there were not less elegantly habited than the Abyssinian dignitaries present?—and whether the Æthiopic fasts were observed in St. Thomas's town, as India is invariably styled by the Abyssinians, or in any other part of the Christian world?

The edifying conversation was, however, suddenly interrupted by the cessation of the priestly voices. Rising and standing on the throne, the monarch

now received in succession, at the hands of the dwarf father confessor, the carved croziers of brass or silver, belonging to the numerous functionaries of the five churches, many hundreds in number; and with exemplary devoutness, he raised all in turn to his lips. With each sacred symbol of the season, was handed a rod of green rushes, and every person present followed the royal example, by wreathing a fillet about his brows, to be worn during the residue of the day. Largesses, with new silver crosses, were then presented to the several Alakas, who were invested with striped cotton robes, and charged with alms for distribution to the poor.

During this tedious process, whereof the king seemed no less heartily weary than ourselves, Tekla Mariam, the state scrivener, had been carefully extracting, from an endless succession of envelopes and dirty cotton bags and wrappers, something which he appeared equally desirous to conceal and to disclose. Drawing me mysteriously into a dark corner, he partially revealed a rudely carved block of wood, presenting nothing very remarkable in its appearance, but evidently much prized by the possessor. "You will have perceived," whispered the learned man, in a scarcely audible voice—"you will doubtless have perceived that this is a fac-simile of the table of the law delivered to Moses on the Mount. It requires nothing but the Ten Commandments; and of these I have no question that you

will be able to furnish me with a copy in the unknown tongue."

Oxen, assembled for consumption in the city on the termination of the great fast, completely choked the road down from the palace. Of five hundred head brought together with this munificent design, there was not one that appeared to possess another hour of natural existence, all being diseased, and so horribly emaciated as to recal vividly to mind the aged pensioners of a Hindoo cattle asylum in the East. Many had actually died since their arrival within the enclosure, and it appeared wonderful whence so many sickening objects had been collected. Yet the liberality of the monarch was vaunted and extolled by all who were to share it; and it was unanimously declared that the fault rested solely with the public officers who had been entrusted with the royal commands.

His Majesty, who, during Passion Week, had been very regular in his vigils and attendance at divine service, passed the greater part of the night in St. Michael's church, and on the first crowing of the cock on Easter morning, broke his long fast. The feasting now became general. The five hundred oxen having been slaughtered, were devoured raw in the various quarters of the city; and whether in eating or in drinking, every inhabitant appeared exerting himself to the utmost to make up as expeditiously as possible for the weary restraint that had been imposed on his appetite. Numbers were soon

to be seen ranging the streets in brutal intoxication; whilst the court buffoon, at the head of a party of drunken fiddlers, made his way to the dwelling of every person of note, and recited his praises in a series of extemporaneous couplets.

According to immemorial custom, two state prisoners were liberated from Góncho, on the occasion of these festivities; the royal clemency not however extending to any of the hapless and unoffending members of the blood-royal, who have shared the dungeon from infancy. During one week a public table is kept by the viceroy, to which the town's people of every grade resorting, drunken brawls and broken heads are diurnal occurrences. Oxen, bread, and beer, were liberally supplied, by the royal command, to the long train of worthless menials at the Residency; and in such high good humour were the priesthood, that, forgetting all their former maledictions and denunciations, they were pleased to ascribe a recent heavy fall of rain, which had proved highly beneficial to the husbandman, solely to the agency of "the king's strong strangers."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

FESTIVITIES OF EASTER.

EASTER-DAY, instead of being celebrated on the Sunday following the first full moon after the vernal equinox, is in Abyssinia kept one lunation later. On its recurrence, we received a special invitation to the annual public banquet held in the palace; and, whilst ascending the hill in full uniform, were preceded by the capering leader of the royal band. "Let me sing—I will sing," he exclaimed, as the attendants would have restrained his antics—"why should not the father of song dance before the fathers of gold?" Tents had been erected in the courtyard, and a separate repast provided for the members of the British Embassy. Countless crowds, decked out in their gayest apparel, filled every avenue and enclosure; and long files of slaves, with jars, baskets, and trenchers, hurrying to and fro from the kitchens and magazines, proclaimed the extensive nature of the preparations making for the regal entertainment.

In the morning at eight o'clock, the doors of the great hall were thrown open, and a burst of wild music from the royal band ushered in the company

to a spacious barn-like apartment, the dingy aspect of which formed a strong contrast to the galaxy of light that illumines regal hospitality in Europe. Holding high festival to the entire adult population of the metropolis, who for six weeks past had subsisted on cow-kail and stinging-nettles, the king reclined in state within a raised alcove, furnished with the wonted velvet cushions and tapestries, and loaded with silver ornaments—the abridgement of ancient Æthiopic magnificence. Priests, nobles, warriors, baalomaals, and pages, stood around the throne, which was flanked by a long line of attendants, bearing straight silver falchions of antique Roman model, belonging to the different churches. Bull-hides carpeted the floor; and the lofty walls of the chamber, although destitute of architectural decoration, were hung throughout with a profusion of richly-emblazoned shields, from each of which depended a velvet scarf or cloak of every colour in the rainbow.

A low horse-shoe table of wicker-work, supported upon basket pedestals, extended the entire length of the hall. Thin unleavened cakes of sour teff heaped one upon the other served as platters. Mountains of wheaten bread piled in close contiguity, and crowned with fragments of stewed fowls, covered the groaning board. Bowls containing a decoction of red pepper, onions, and grease, were flanked by long-necked decanters of old mead; and at short intervals stood groups of slaves carrying baskets

crammed with reeking collops of raw flesh just severed from the newly-slain carcass.

Taking their seats in treble rows upon the ground, the crowded guests were each provided with his own knife, fashioned like a reaping-hook, and serving him equally in the battle-field and at the banquet. Four hundred voracious appetites, whetted by forty days of irksome abstinence, were constantly ministered to by fresh arrivals of quivering flesh from the court-yard, where oxen in quick succession were being thrown down and slaughtered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. Barillés and capacious horns filled with hydromel of intoxicating age were rapidly drained and replenished under the eye of the monarch; and strings of eunuchs with the females pertaining to the royal kitchen, clad in gala dresses and striped cotton robes, passed and repassed continually with interminable supplies of bread to rebuild the demolished fabric on the uprising of each satiated group.

Again the great doors were thrown open, and another famished set entered, amid the increasing din. Harpers and fiddlers played, danced, and sang with untiring perseverance; and ever and anon one of the king's female choristers lifted up her shrill voice with the most extravagant panegyric on the hospitality and munificence of her royal master, or burst forth into unqualified eulogy on the liberality of his British guests.

"In stature like the lance he bears,
His godlike mien the prince declares;
And fam'd for virtue through the land,
All bow to Sáloo's just command.

"The sabre feels the royal grasp,
And Pagans writhe in death's cold clasp;
The Galla taste the captive fare,
And dread the vengeance which they dare."

"Our warriors tremble at the sight of the mighty elephant, but he sinks prostrate beneath the guns of the white men—Weiho, weiho,

They are a brave nation.

"We have been loaded with strange gifts, for the white men hold in their hands the keys of health and wealth—Weiho,

They are a great nation.

"Then hail to the friends who came o'er the wide water,
Strangers and guests from a far distant land;
And welcome to Shoa, the fortune which brought her
The lords of the daring and generous hand."

The royal band, which occupied the vacant space between the tables, is composed of many wind instruments of various lengths and sizes—the *embilta* having a perforation to which the lips are applied as in the flute, whilst the *malakat* is fashioned after the form of a trombone. No performer possesses above one pipe, nor, like the Russian, is he master of more than one note. Tune there is none—each playing according to the dictates of his own taste, unguided by any musical scale. After the hoarse and terrible blast of the trumps, the symphony falls soft upon the ear; and it was on this occasion

curiously contrasted with the deep thunder of the *kubbero*, which pealed without intermission from the secret apartments of the queen.

The harp, styled *bugana*, is a truly strange fabrication of wood, leather, and sheep's entrails. It presents the appearance of an old portmanteau which has been built upon by children with the rudest materials, in imitation of the lyre of the days of Jubal. Possessing five strings, and used only as an accompaniment to the voice, the monotonous notes produced are in strict unison with the appearance of the instrument; and even in the halls of Menilek, where the chords are struck by a master finger, they shed "no soul of music," and might be mute with advantage.

What then is to be said of the Abyssinian fiddle, whose squeaking voice presided at this festive board? Alas! the inharmonious sounds elicited by the grating contact of the bow might lead to the conclusion that the unhappy spirit of music was confined in the interior, and uttered harsh screams and moans as fresh tortures were inflicted upon her agonized sinews! A gourd, or a hollow square of wood, is covered with a skin of parchment as a sounding-board, and furnished with a rude neck and a single string. Years of practice have imparted to Dághie, the court buffoon, an extraordinary degree of excellence; but even he is not Paganini; and every amateur performer in the realm considering himself at perfect liberty to scrape throughout the

day with soul-harrowing perseverance, unlucky, indeed, must be pronounced the site of that residence which is adjacent to the proprietor of a *masanko*.

As Easter day drew on to its close, the riotous mirth of uncontrolled festivity waxed louder and louder within the palace walls, whilst quarrels and drunken brawls prevailed throughout the city. The carousal continued until dark, by which time the bones of three hundred and fifty steers had been picked—countless measures of wheat had been consumed—and so many hogsheads of potent old hydromel had been drained to the dregs, that, saving the royal and munificent host, scarcely one sober individual, whether noble or plebeian, was any where to be seen.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

SAINT GEORGE'S DAY.

At Kondié, in the church dedicated to the patron saint of England, lie interred the remains of Woosen Suggud, and thither, according to wont, the despot proceeded on Saint George's day. The sepulchre of the departed monarch is screened from gaze amid a sombre grove of evergreen juniper, assuming the shapes, some of the cedar, others of the cypress and the yew :—

> "Dark trees still sad when others' grief is fled,
> The only constant mourners o'er the dead."

Kings alone are honoured with a coffin. Manufactured of sweet wood, and perforated with many apertures, it is placed on stone trestles amid clouds of frankincense, and after a season removed into the mausoleum; the walls of which are usually bedaubed with clumsy designs, intended to commemorate the exploits in the hunting field, the military actions, and the heroic achievements of the royal occupant. His Majesty's orisons at the shrine of his father being concluded, he turned his steps to the palace, now fast falling to decay,

which formed the scene of the assassination of the despotic tyrant. Surrounded by the former capital of Shoa, it occupies the bleak summit of one of the loftiest mountains in the range, and commands a magnificent prospect over the greater portion of Efát. Mamrat, now diminished from thirteen to one thousand feet, no longer loomed a giant. Through the clouds which flitted across its stern bosom, lay revealed the only path by which the royal treasures are accessible; and the white peak of Wóti, rising from dense masses of timber, and terminating in a basaltic column, now formed the most conspicuous feature in the rugged landscape.

"You observe those woods," inquired His Majesty, pointing after a long silence to the gloomy forests which stretched away towards the long white storehouses of Arámba: "they conceal a cavern into which no creature can enter and live. The man who should venture one step beyond the entrance would be seen no more. If a dog goes in, or a bird, or even a serpent, it will surely die. There is no bottom to that cave, and none can say whither it leads. Formerly people went to cut wood in the neighbourhood. A man lost his way, and was unheard of for months. His friends believed him dead. They mourned for him, and scratched their temples, and he was forgotten. Suddenly he re-appeared, reduced to a skeleton, and looking like a ghost. They brought him to me to know what should be done with him. He

had lived like the *guréza* upon wild berries, and when I asked him what he had seen, he replied that he had seen the devil. Wóti is a bad place, and the forests take fire, and all my subjects fear to go thither."

A catastrophe of this nature had recently taken place; and a quantity of fuel stored for the royal kitchen having been destroyed, it was the king's present object to ascertain the extent of damage sustained. Ayto Wolda Hána exerted his cracked voice in loud complaints of others, and so that himself escaped the much-dreaded censure, the old man evidently cared not much who suffered. Herein he was so far successful, that the sub-governor of the district was fined in the amount of one hundred dollars, about ten times the value of property destroyed, and every male inhabitant of the neighbourhood received sentence of imprisonment.

The cold summit of Kondie is clothed with heather and with the *jibera*, a lofty species of *lobelia*, which attains the height of fifteen or twenty feet. As it is believed to exert a prejudicial effect upon the passer by, and often to cause death, the royal cortége waged active war against every plant by the way-side—His Majesty in person sustaining a part in hostilities designed to counteract the evil influence. Bands of warriors charging on horse-back, delivered their spears simultaneously, and the doomed tree, if not cut over, was at least transfixed by a score of shafts. Excelling in skill, the

monarch betted heavily upon every throw, and rarely did he lose. At forty yards the lance left his hand with unerring precision, and perforating the soft pulpy stem immediately below the bushy head, often passed quite through, to fall on the other side.

"Where did the commander learn to throw a spear?' he suddenly exclaimed in merry mood, elevating his voice, and looking round towards the spot on which I was taking share in the proceedings. "Now, *Gaita*," he continued, as I approached, "I will give you a mule if you hit that tree, and if you do not, by the death of Woosen Suggud you shall forfeit your best rifle." Frequent practice having rendered me tolerably expert, my first lance fortunately passed through the stem, and the second threw its crown upon the ground. His Majesty was obviously satisfied; but whilst the mule completely escaped his treacherous recollection, my "best rifle," alas! had been already doomed to change hands. It remained but a brief period in those of the lawful proprietor, and Ayto Hábti, the master armourer, was to be seen the very next morning engraving on the barrel with punch and hammer certain ominous Amháric characters, signifying, "SÁHELA SELÁSSIE, who is the Negoos of Shoa, Efát, and the Galla."

Hunting down the partridge with dogs occupied the residue of the day. Parties stationed themselves at intervals along the heather-grown slopes of the hills, where the bird abounds, and by dint of

unceasing persecution kept the victim selected so perpetually on the wing, that after three or four long flights it was unable to rise again. Many were thus killed with sticks, or taken alive; but wherever His Majesty was forthcoming, he rested a long double-barrelled fowling piece over the shoulder of an attendant to insure steady aim—and the wearied quarry, believing itself safe in a bush, was suddenly blown to atoms.

Northern Abyssinia was now in a more disturbed state than ever; and numerous youths who had attempted to proceed to Gondar for the purpose of being ordained, had been compelled to abandon the journey, and return to Ankóber. They brought tidings of an engagement between Ras Ali and Dedjasmach[1] Oubié, which had been fought at Salem Okko, in the vicinity of Debra Tábor. The Ras being personally opposed to his rebel vassal, was believed to have fallen early in the day. His rumoured death proving the signal for disorder and retreat, the camp was left in possession of the enemy, who consigned it to the flames, under the conviction that victory was theirs. But the leader

[1] Dedjasmach, often contracted to Dedjach, signifies "the warrior of the door," and is the title of governors under the puppet emperor of Æthiopia. As in the Ottoman empire the Pacha is distinguished by the number of his tails, so is the Dedjasmach by the number of his kettle-drums. He is entitled to one for each province under his control, and loses no opportunity of finding his account in the troubled waters by asserting independence.

had merely fled; and as the evening closed, his partizans, recovering from their panic, rallied, and fell with irresistible fury on the victors, who were little prepared for further hostilities, and the execrated tyrant Oubié, who carries with him the curses of his oppressed subjects, was, with his two sons, made prisoner.

Abba Salama, the Abuna, who is equally respected by all parties, was in the camp of the vanquished, but the holy man found an honourable asylum. The spiritual despotism exercised by the primate from the first moment of his arrival in Abyssinia calls vividly to mind the period when the mandates of the pope were as implicitly obeyed, and his ghostly influence similarly dreaded, by the potentates of Europe; and independently of his spiritual power, which exalts him greatly above the most potent of the rulers of the land, his holiness is far from being contemptible as a temporal prince. The hundred and eighth successor to St. Mark the Evangelist, reclining in his humble divan within the Coptic quarters at Grand-Caïro, surrounded by the dignity of coffee and pipes, would ill recognize his juvenile delegate at Gondar, where both these luxuries are held in abomination, could he behold him in the enjoyment of revenues many times in excess of his own—ordaining a thousand priests in a single day—and receiving the homage of all the proud actors engaged in the troubled drama of Abyssinian politics.

War had not visited Shoa; but the peace of many a family was yet destined to be disturbed by an arbitrary proceeding on the part of the crown. As the period of the king's departure from the capital drew nigh, many of the royal slaves who had voluntarily sold their liberty during the great famine of St. Luke[1], casting themselves at the footstool of the throne, implored the restoration of their freedom in consideration of many long years of servitude. Enraged at what he termed the ingratitude of those whom he had fed when they must otherwise have starved, His Majesty, labouring under a strange infatuation, bade them "begone," and, in utter defiance of all the existing laws of the realm, that day promulgated an edict through the royal herald, that from thenceforth the progeny of all his numerous slaves, whether the offspring of free fathers or of free mothers, should be accounted his sole property, and forthwith render themselves to be enrolled by his drivers, in order to have their daily task allotted.

The capital was in a state of wild confusion and consternation. Weeping and wailing resounded in every hut, and no Abyssinian possessed sufficient courage to oppose the dictates of the angry despot. The presence of the British Embassy now proved of that salutary and commanding influence which humanity and civilization must ever exert over

[1] Each year is in Abyssinia dedicated to one of the four Evangelists, according to the order of the Gospels.

barbarity and savage ignorance. Deeming the opportunity imperative, and considering the chance of success to be well worth the risk of a misunderstanding with the court, I earnestly entreated His Majesty to reflect, "that the name of Sáhela Selássie, hitherto so beloved of all, would lose a portion of its lustre and brightness. That all men are mortal. That kings do not reign for ever; and that the groans of his unhappy subjects, the props of his power and kingdom, who had heretofore lived in the enjoyment of the liberty to which they were born, but were now pining heart-broken in the thraldom of slavery, would add little to the comfort of the close of his illustrious life."

My petition was accompanied by the enquiry, "how I should be able to represent his proceedings to the Government by which I had been sent?" and it was attended with the most satisfactory results. The king, who had still the fear of God before his eyes, avowed, "that the act had proceeded in a hurried moment of wrath, and that his European children had made him thoroughly sensible of its injustice and cruelty" The offensive proclamation was on the instant annulled; and four thousand seven hundred unfortunate victims to its promulgation, released from the house of bondage, and from the degrading shackles of slavery, after they had renounced all hope of redemption, returned to their homes and to their families, blessing as they went the name of "the white men."

CHAPTER XXXV.

SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE TRADE IN SHOA.

THE annals of slavery point clearly to war as the principal cause of the monstrous crime of selling our fellow-creatures like cattle in the market. One nation having taken from another a greater number of captives than could be exchanged on equal terms, it is easy to comprehend how the victors, finding the maintenance of their prisoners expensive and inconvenient, first compelled them to work for their daily bread. Emerged from the limited wants of savage life, man next saw productions of art, which he eagerly coveted; and lacking habits of industry by which to earn them for himself, he compelled all whom his superiority enabled him to bring under subjection to pass their lives in labouring for his advantage.

In Africa especially, where the human passions are unbridled, and man emulates the ferocity of the beast of prey, war proves a never-drying spring of misery and bondage, and slavery is the inevitable lot of all who are not slain on the battle-field, or massacred in the sacking of towns and villages. The weak and unsuccessful warrior, who sues for

mercy beneath the uplifted spear of his opponent, purchases existence at the expense of liberty; and in time of famine the freeman often becomes a voluntary slave, in order to avoid the greater calamity of inevitable starvation. By the philosophic and reflecting mind death would doubtless be esteemed the lighter evil of the two, but the untutored savage, fainting with hunger, thinks with Esau of old, "Behold, I am at the point to die—what profit shall this birthright do to me?"

Crime, necessity, insolvency, the inhumanity of a harsh creditor, a spirit of retaliation in petty disputes, and the sordid love of gain, for which parents will even sell their own children, severally assist in feeding the demand for slaves—the law of every African state either tolerating or directly sanctioning the evil; and wherever the Mohammadan faith prevails, frequent predatory incursions, characterized by the most atrocious violence, are made into the territories of all neighbouring infidels, who are systematically hunted down and entrapped as a religious duty.

Slaves in Africa are thus in proportion to the freemen of about three to one; but although the number of individuals reduced to a state of bondage by the operation of the above causes, and the destruction created, both as regards life and property, is immense, the whole combined are but as a single grain of dust in the balance, when compared with the slavery, the destitution, and the desolation, that

is daily entailed by the unceasing bloody struggles betwixt state and state. Towns and villages are then obliterated from the face of the earth, and thousands upon thousands of the population, of whatever age or sex, are hurried into hopeless captivity.

In a country reft into ten thousand petty governments, the majority of which are independent and jealous one of the other; where every freeman, inured to arms from the first hour that he is capable of bearing them, pants for an opportunity of displaying his valour in the field; where the cherished recollection of hereditary feuds; the love of plunder inherent in every savage breast, and the bigoted zeal of religious enthusiasts, all conspire to afford hourly pretexts for war—the sword of desolation is never suffered to rust within the scabbard. The fact of one nation being stronger than another is even sufficient; and whilst hostilities, originating frequently in the most frivolous provocations, are prosecuted with relentless fury, robbery on a great and national scale, forming one of the chief features of African character, is almost universally prevalent. Here it is perpetrated by no concealed or proscribed ruffian; neither is it limited to those poorer tribes who are exposed to the temptation of rich caravans skirting their borders in progress to distant lands. Each needy soldier seeks with his sword to redress the unequal distribution made by the hand of fortune. The most distinguished warrior chieftains consider it a glory to place themselves at the head

of an expedition undertaken solely for purposes of plunder; and the crime of stealing human beings in order to sell them into foreign markets, which, with all its attendant cruelty, is so widely practised throughout the benighted continent, is one in which the greatest of her sovereigns do not hesitate to participate.

The following narrative by a native of the village of Súppa, in Enárea, detailing the history of his capture and subsequent vicissitudes, may be taken as a fair specimen of the usual circumstances attending the transfer of the kidnapped victim from one merciless dealer to another, in his progress to Abyssinia through the interior provinces which form the focus of slavery in the north-east.

"When twenty years of age, whilst tending my father's flocks, an armed band of the Ooma Galla, with whom my tribe had long been in enmity, swept suddenly down, and took myself with six other youths prisoners, killing four more who resisted. Having been kept bound hand and foot during five days, I was sold to the Toomee Galla, one of the nearest tribes, for thirty *ámoles* (about six shillings and three-pence sterling). The bargain was concluded in the Toomee market-place, which is called Sundáffo, where, in consequence of the dearness of salt, two male slaves are commonly bought for one dollar; and after nightfall, the Mohammadan rover by whom I had been purchased, came and took me away.

"Having been kept bound in his house another week, I was taken two days' journey with a large slave caravan, and sold privately to the Nono Galla for a few ells of blue calico. My companions in captivity were assorted according to their age and size, and walked in double file, the stout and able-bodied only, whereof I was one, having their hands tied behind them. In Meegra, the market-place of the Nono, I was, after six weeks' confinement, sold by public auction to the Gumbitchu Galla for forty pieces of salt (value eight shillings and four-pence). Thence I was taken to the market-place which is beyond Sequala, on the plain of the Háwash, and sold for seventy pieces of salt to the Soddo Galla, and immediately afterwards to Roqué, the great slave mart in the Yerrur district, where I was sold for one hundred *ámoles*," being 1*l.* sterling.

"From Roqué I was driven to Alio Amba, in Shoa, where a Mohammadan subject of Sáhela Selássie purchased me in the market of Abd el Russool for twelve dollars; but after three months, my master falling into disgrace, the whole of his property was confiscated, and I became the slave of the Negoos, which I still am, although permitted to reside with my family, and only called upon to plough, reap, and carry wood. Exclusive of halts, the journey from my native village occupied fifteen days. I was tolerably fed, and not maltreated. All the merchants through whose hands I passed were

Mohammadans; and until within a few stages of Alio Amba, I was invariably bound at night, and thus found no opportunity to escape. Prior to my own enslavement, I had been extensively engaged as a kidnapper, and in this capacity had made party in three great slave hunts into the country of the Doko negroes beyond Cáffa; in the course of which, four thousand individuals of both sexes were secured."

From Enárea and Guráguê, the two slave marts principally frequented by the dealers in human flesh who trade through the Abyssinian states, the traffic is conducted to the sea-coast *viâ* Sennaar, Argóbba, Aussa, and Hurrur—importations into Shoa passing through the kingdom by two great highways from the interior. The first is by Ankóber to the market-place of Abd el Russool, where purchases are eagerly made by the caravan traders from Hurrur, Zeyla, and Tajúra; the other by Debra Libanos to the market of Antzóchia adjoining Asselléli, the frontier town on the north, whence they pass through Upper Abyssinia to Massowah and Raheïta, supplying also the Aussa caravans, which come to Dowwé, on the frontier of Worra Káloo.

In addition to a tax of one in every ten, Sáhela Selássie possesses the right of pre-emption of all slaves that pass through his dominions, his governors selecting and submitting for the royal approval those which appear best worthy of consideration, when a price placed by the holder on the

head of each is modified by His Majesty at pleasure. A transit duty of four pieces of salt is further levied upon every individual, male or female, of whatever age, exposed for sale or barter; and the number annually exported by the roads above named being estimated at from fifteen to twenty thousand, the revenues derived from the traffic in his fellow-men by the Christian monarch may be averaged at eight hundred pounds.

His Majesty's household slaves, male and female, exceed eight thousand. Of the latter, three hundred are concubines of the royal harem; and of the former, fifty are eunuchs. The residue of both sexes are employed in a variety of servile offices, and they each receive a portion of barley sufficient to compose two small loaves. Beyond this they must provide their own maintenance: many whose business it is to fetch fuel from the royal forests, being, however, suffered to dispose of whatever wood they can carry away in addition to the load imposed; whilst the whole, after the due performance of their allotted task, are permitted, according to their respective functions, to hire themselves to private individuals.

Slavery is hereditary, not only on the side of the mother, but also on that of the father; and if a free woman weds a slave, her progeny becomes the property of the owner of her husband. But the bondsmen of the king, it has been seen, form an exception to this rule, their offspring being free if born of a

free woman—a privilege which may be traced to the circumstance of the royal slaves having a stated duty to perform, for which a certain daily allowance of food is granted; whereas the whole time and labour of the slave of the commoner are at the exclusive disposal of the master, who supports the wife also. Marriage between free persons and the slaves of His Majesty are thus by no means unfrequent; the bondsman, after the performance of his allotted task, enjoying liberty to return daily to his family, and to appropriate the residue of his time.

A child born in slavery receives subsistence, in a limited proportion, from the moment of coming into the world, the liabilities of bondage being incurred from the cradle. As a check on those who reside with a free parent in various parts of the kingdom, an annual census of the whole is taken by the royal scribes, when those who are ascertained to have acquired a competent age are summoned to their task at one of the royal establishments; and it too often happens that when incapacitated by infirmity from further labour, the daily dole is discontinued through the parsimony of the servants of the crown.

Caravans, consisting of from one hundred to three thousand individuals of all ages, pass through Shoa during the greater portion of the year. Three-fourths are young boys and girls, many of them quite children, whose tender age precludes a sense

of their condition. Even adults are unfettered, and the majority are in good spirits, all being well fed and taken care of, although many of both sexes arrive in a state of perfect nudity. Surrounded by the rovers on horseback, they are driven promiscuously along the road, males and females being separated at the termination of each march, and made to sit in detached groups comprising from ten to fifteen souls, who are deterred from wandering by the exhibition of the whip; but this is rarely used, except for the chastisement of the unruly, who may seek to effect their escape.

In the eyes of every African, the value of a slave increases in the ratio of his distance from the land of his nativity, the chance of his absconding being reduced in the same proportion. The usual prices in the Shoan market are from ten to twenty German crowns; but females possessing superior personal attractions often fetch from fifty to eighty, which outlay is returned three-fold in Arabia. The profits accruing from the trade are thus obviously large; and notwithstanding the murders which are annually perpetrated by freebooters on the road to the sea-coast, the mortality can scarcely be said to exceed that under the ordinary circumstances of African life.

The hebdomadal sale of human flesh whi h takes place in the public market at Abd el Russool, the disgusting parade of victims, and the sensuality of the savage purchasers, are sufficient to draw forth

every sentiment of indignation, and to elicit every feeling of sympathy; but it must be confessed that slavery in this portion of Africa, excepting as regards the powers pertaining to it, is in fact little more than servitude. The newly-captured become soon reconciled to their lot and condition, their previous domestic life having too often been one of actual bondage, although not nominally so. And even in the sultry plains of the Adaïel, few individuals of the long droves that are daily to be seen on their weary march to the coast with Danákil caravans, afford indications of being tortured with regret at the loss of their freedom, and of their native land, or with recollections of the verdant plains whence avarice and cruelty have torn them.

From the governor to the humblest peasant, every house in Shoa possesses slaves of both sexes, in proportion to the wealth of the proprietor; and in so far as an opinion may be formed upon appearances, their condition, with occasional, but rare exceptions, is one of comfort and ease. Mild in its character, their bondage is tinctured with none of the horrors of West Indian slavery. The servitude imposed is calculated to create neither suffering nor exhaustion. There is no merciless taskmaster to goad the victim to excessive exertion—no "white man's scorn" to be endured; and, although severed from home, from country, and from all the scenes with which his childhood had been familiar, his lot is not unfrequently improved. Naturalized in the

house of his master, he is invariably treated with lenity—usually with indulgence—often with favour; and under a despotic sovereign, to whom servile instruments are uniformly the most agreeable, the caprices of fortune may prefer the exile to posts of confidence and emolument, and may even exalt him to the highest dignities.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

INTRODUCTION OF SLAVERY INTO ABYSSINIA.

ALTHOUGH the history of North-eastern Africa is very imperfectly recorded, it is certain that Carthage, Egypt, and Æthiopia, early acquired and long maintained a prevailing influence therein. The Carthaginians possessed themselves of nearly the whole of the northern portion, whilst the Egyptians and Æthiopians occupied the east to the very centre. The extension of these great empires tended considerably to limit the trade in human flesh, and the world being in feud in every quarter, needed not to be supplied with slaves from Africa.

But this aspect of affairs was materially altered so soon as these three empires, losing their power, became subdivided into sundry governments, the diffusion of Christianity and civilization in Europe and Asia meanwhile restricting the slave trade to the African continent. Although not generally representing the character which their name implies, the Christians of the Occident and Orient had at least given up the system amongst themselves; and by the former especially it was very little practised until after the discovery of America,

when it was revived and encouraged by the Spaniards; and the Negro being considered better fitted for hard labour than the aborigines of the New World, Africa began to be regarded as the slave-mart for the whole universe. About the same period Æthiopia was first invaded by numberless hordes of Pagan Galla, migrating from the south; and not long afterwards Graan, the fanatic Mohammadan enemy, commenced the overthrow of this then powerful empire, which was speedily dismembered, and has never since been able to regain its former limits.

The heathen intruders soon relaxing in their united efforts against the Christians, those Galla tribes which had settled on Abyssinian ground began to contest among themselves for the supremacy over the newly-acquired territory, and to enslave each other. The Mohammadans, who had meanwhile gained a footing in the disturbed country, being slave-dealers by profession, greedily availed themselves of the opportunity afforded by these intestine divisions to trade in Pagan prisoners, females especially, who possess the recommendation of superior personal attractions to the generality of "Afric's dark daughters"—and thus the traffic spread rapidly around Abyssinia. Partly from fear of their enemies, and partly from being less interested in slavery than the Moslems, the Christians no longer ventured beyond the frontiers of the country they retained, and the avenues to the sea-

coast, as well as those through the Galla tribes in the interior, thus fell together with the whole commerce into the hands of the bigoted disciples of the Prophet. They devoted their lives to the purchase and sale of human flesh, a trade with which they connected the propagation of their faith, and their market was ever supplied by the out-pouring of innumerable prisoners of war from the distant nations of the interior.

The origin of the slave-trade in these quarters may thus be referred to the commencement of hostilities therein, and to the presence of Mohammadans, by whom it was fostered and encouraged. Grain and cattle excepted, the wild and greedy Galla possessed not a single commodity to barter for the alluring foreign wares exhibited by the rover, but his captured foe presented the ready means of supplying whatsoever he coveted. The empire of Abyssinia being dismembered and enfeebled by the tide of invasion, its rulers, far from seeking to crush the hostilities that prevailed among the Gentiles, naturally rejoiced to see intestine feuds raging throughout a nation, which, if united, could have swept away the small remnant of Æthiopic power, once so predominant.

The Christians, moreover, had become so corrupted by evil example, that, in lieu of opposing a barrier to the advance of slavery, they shortly adopted and encouraged the debasing traffic. Those provinces especially which were separated from the

principal seat of government not only afforded a market to numbers of Pagan prisoners, but extended to the dealer in slaves a safe road by which thousands were annually exported to Arabia; and Shoa, Efát, Gurágué, and Cambát, the southernmost provinces of Abyssinia, having more especially suffered at the hands of the Galla hordes, it is not difficult to understand how, in a confused political and ecclesiastical state of things, the detestation entertained towards their heathen persecutors prompted the population to purchase as drudges those of their enemies who had been captured in war.

When the rulers of Shoa began to extend their dominions, and to subdue the nearer tribes of Galla invaders, Christianity was propagated by the sword; but the Mohammadan traders, far from being checked or arrested in their dealings, were only induced to extend their traffic to more remote regions of north-eastern Africa. Instead of purchasing slaves at Ankóber, as had been their wont when that capital was still in Pagan hands, they were compelled, after its recapture, to seek their victims in Gurágué, and beyond. Those provinces of Abyssinia wherein the seat of government was established after the demolition of the Æthiopic empire, preserved more or less of their ancient customs, which sanctioned the enslavement of a captured enemy for the term of seven years, according to the Mosaic law; and the practice is to the pre-

sent day retained in Gojam and Tigré—the inhabitants of these states neither buying nor selling slaves, but consigning to a few years of bondage all prisoners from the wild tribes of Shankela taken in war.

The enslavement of this heathen people, who are often barbarously hunted down for sport, is defended upon the grounds that so fierce, swarthy, and bestial a race, existing in the rudest possible form of savage state, must be the accursed of mankind, and entirely beyond the pale of natural rights. But the Christians of Western and Northern Abyssinia condemn this opinion of their brethren in the south and east; and Tekla Georgis, the late emperor of Gondar, having catechised a number of Shoan ecclesiastics as to the reason of their countenancing slavery and slave polygamy, reprobated both proceedings in the severest terms.

The separation of Shoa from the imperial sway of Northern Abyssinia, by the Galla invasion, was, as may be supposed, far from improving the morals of the people. The first rulers of Shoa, aspiring to ascendency over all the minor independent principalities, were fain to tolerate a variety of abuses which had crept into the Abyssinian church during the reign of anarchy, confusion, and barbarism; and, however well they might have felt inwardly disposed to work the reformation of their subjects, they durst not, in the infancy of their power, attempt the suppression of a custom to which the entire

population of the subjugated districts were so strongly wedded. Moreover, they had begun to follow the example of the Gondar dynasty in respect to the hospitable entertainment by the crown of all foreigners and strangers; to which end a large establishment being indispensable for the preparation of the daily maintenance styled "dirgo," they considered that the manual labour could better be performed by slaves selected from among the thousands that annually passed through their dominions than by their own free subjects.

The parsimony of their national character also doubtless favoured this introduction of slavery as a domestic institution. The sovereign was above all things desirous of acquiring a reputation for munificence without actually impairing the state revenues; and he felt anxious at the same time to pave the road to popularity by relieving his subjects of that drudgery which would have led to an aversion towards visiters, highly inimical to the royal interests. All despotic rulers are prone to greater confidence in the slave than in the freeman; and Abyssinian sophistry probably led the first kings of Shoa to argue, that hospitality extended towards strangers and pilgrims in the land would vindicate in the sight of Heaven the infliction of bitter bondage upon those who at that period, even more than at the present day, were execrated and abhorred.

The unceasing wars, wherein the feudal subjects of Shoa were personally engaged, being unfavour-

able for agricultural pursuits, they were not slow in imitating the example set by their monarch, as well in household slavery as in slave polygamy. Both king and people believed that the wretch exported from Africa was destined to Christian countries beyond the seas, where the truths of the Gospel would be imparted to him; and hence the slave-holder in Shoa, although prohibited from dealing in the flesh and blood of his fellow-creatures as a trade, was permitted to resell Mohammadan or Pagan purchases, who refused to embrace the religion of Æthiopia.

Slavery amongst the Galla tribes is cradled and nursed in the unceasing intestine feuds of that savage and disorganized people; but the circumstances attending its existence in Gurágué, although resting upon the same basis, are somewhat different in character. Since the period that the heathen inroads first cut off that Christian country from the ancient Æthiopic empire, and foes begirt it on all sides like wild beasts prowling for their prey, it has been thrown into a position of peculiar misfortune, and would gladly seek repose by placing itself again under the protection of its legitimate sovereign. For this boon it has often applied to Sáhela Selássie; but from motives of prudence he has not chosen to extend either his visits or his authority beyond the frontier village of Aiméllele.

Occupying about one and a half degree of longitude, by one degree of latitude, and swarming

with population, Gurágué is at this moment in a state similar to Palestine of old, whereof the Scripture saith, "There was no king in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes." In the absence of a supreme head, each village or community elects its own temporary governor, who is perpetually removed by the cabals and caprice of the people. Whilst the Galla make constant predatory inroads from without, anarchy reigns within. A multitude of private feuds animate the turbulent population; and there being neither king nor laws, it is not surprising that every man should stretch forth his hand to kidnap his neighbour. Among the southern portions especially, in the domicile or in the open street, the stronger seizes upon the weaker as his bondsman, and sells him to the greedy Mohammadan dealers, who hover round like a host of hungry vultures, and are ever at hand with their glittering gewgaws; the innate love of which induces brother to sell sister, and the parent to carry her own offspring to the market.

Annually pouring out many thousands of her sons and daughters in every direction, this wretched Christian province, a prey to lawless violence, and the theatre of every monstrous and detestable crime, cries aloud for the intervention of the philanthropist. Gurágué is the very hotbed of slavery in Eastern Africa, north of the equator; and it claims the earnest attention of all who are interested in the suppression of the evil. None of the surrounding

countries would seem to be unvitiated by the baneful influence of the slave-trade; and all are sunk in the lowest and most grovelling superstition. Susa, Korchássie, Wollámo, Cambát, with every other isolated principality once appended to the ancient empire, although still professing the mild tenets of the Christian faith, take an active part in the capture and sale of their fellow-savages. Villages are fired, and the inhabitants seized as they fly in terror from the flames that envelope their wigwams; and the aged and the infirm are butchered, because unfit for drudgery. The new-born babe is torn from its parent in the hour of its birth to be ruthlessly immolated at the shrine of the idol; and the shores of Lake Umo are white with the bleaching bones of hapless female victims, who have been selected from the drove for their superior charms, and have been launched into its depths by the superstitious Moslem slave-driver, to propitiate the genius of the water!

CHAPTER XXXVII.

OPERATION OF LEGITIMATE COMMERCE UPON THE SLAVE-TRADE IN NORTH-EASTERN AFRICA.

A REVIEW of the nature and actual extent of slavery in Christian Abyssinia, where the exile is sold and purchased—of the circumstances attending his loss of liberty in the countries whence he is stolen and exported—and of the various causes and passions that conspire to favour the continuance of the internal commerce in human flesh—leads naturally to the consideration of the remedy. This is no new subject. It is one which has been illustrated by the eloquence of British senators, and by the pen of many private philanthropists, who have devoted their energies to the restitution of the lost rights of man, and have sought, under God's blessing, to dry up the baneful springs that for so many ages have filled to overflowing the fountain of African misery.

Bondage has been shown to arise in wars and intestine feuds, and to be nurtured by evil passions, by avarice, and by worldly interest. The excitement and delight of the foray, the surprize, and the captivity which follows, are by all tribes in Africa regarded as the highest themes of their glory. The gratification of power, sensuality, and revenge, are

difficult of eradication; and the easy though infamous acquisition of property, is a permanent incentive to violence of all kinds. The interests, also, by which the diabolical and debasing traffic is supported are not those of a few individuals. It is interwoven with the government, the commerce, the wants, and the revenues of many nations. The tribe that mourns to-day the loss of its young men and maidens, is ready on the morrow with heart and hand to carry on amongst others the work of captivity; and the victor of one hour may be vanquished the next. The kings and rulers of the land profit by the transit of slave caravans through their dominions—the countries all derive gain from the inhuman barter—the intermediate clans have each their share in the traffic—the merchant on the sea-coast drives a most profitable trade—and the lazy Arab to whom the wretched beings are finally consigned, has existed too long in a state of utter indolence and inactivity, willingly to assist himself in any of the ordinary laborious avocations of life.

Commerce being a school for the improvement of nations, it may safely be anticipated that the important treaty concluded by Great Britain with the king of Shoa will tend to the temporal and intellectual advancement of the now ignorant and degraded natives of the north-eastern interior, in proportion to the extent of their intercourse with enlightened Europeans. The supply of foreign manufactures, which the African deems indispens-

able, has always been, and still is, exclusively in the hands of Mohammadan merchants, declared slave dealers, who will receive human beings only in exchange for their wares. A strong inducement to the continuance of the traffic will therefore be removed by the visits of men whose tacit example, without any declamation against slavery, cannot fail to have a beneficial influence upon untutored races, who have hitherto been taught and compelled to believe that their wants cannot be supplied unless through the medium of the barter of their fellow-creatures. The restoration of tranquillity to the provinces, which can alone be effected by a legal trade, must have the important result of putting an end to the exportation of slaves, which is here liable not only to the same objections as on the western coast, but to the still greater evil, that the victims carried away are chiefly Christians, who inevitably lose in Arabia not only their liberty but also their religion.

The Mohammadan dealer being solely dependent for his supply of European manufactures on the brokers located in various parts of the coast—keen, artful, and rapacious Banians—he must speedily be driven from the market by the British merchant, who will at the same time create numberless new wants, to satisfy which the native will be goaded to industrious habits. The majority, both of people and rulers, will soon be enabled to comprehend the disadvantage of a trade which swallows up the

flower of the population; and will open their eyes to the fact, that temporal wealth, far from being diminished, as they now believe, by the operation of such a measure, would in reality be much augmented. They will at the same time perceive that the regular supply of European trinkets, so inestimable in their eyes, depends in a principal measure upon the tranquillity of the country; and since slaves are no longer in demand as an article of barter, they will generally be better disposed to permit and to bring about that state of peace and quietude which is so essential to mercantile pursuits.

An entrance to countries now only accessible by means of commerce, and at the pace of a merchant caravan, will thus be afforded, and a friendly understanding established, which may be expected to pave the way to the introduction of more effectual measures towards decreasing the supply of slaves in the quarters whence they are derived. European commerce conveying the strongest tacit argument against the traffic in human flesh, so long the staple business of all, must favour the speedy formation of advantageous treaties with many native chiefs for its entire suppression within their dominions—treaties which could not be proposed without prejudice so long as the slave-trade, deeply rooted, continues so intimately connected with the habits, pursuits, and interests of the whole population. Time is of course requisite to bring about the con-

summation desired to mercantile enterprize. The avarice of some of the more ignorant and degraded potentates may long induce them to retain the emoluments arising from the sale of their subjects, notwithstanding the more than equivalent revenues afforded by legitimate transit duties; but as establishments which are now fostered and fattened on the hotbed of slavery become gradually extinguished, the nefarious traffic cannot fail, in equal proportion, to disappear before the golden wand of commerce.

In all those interior countries to the south, whence slaves are principally drawn, the mass of the miserable population would hail the advent of European intervention, towards the preservation of their liberty. The Christian would find repose beneath the treaty concluded by the white man, and the wild Galla would cease to have an interest in the continual hostilities which now supply the market with human beings.

It might reasonably be conjectured, that if it be practicable to conclude an anti-slavery treaty with any African ruler, it must be especially so with one professing the tenets of the Christian faith, and who may thus be supposed capable of receiving moral arguments—with a despot whose every will is law, who is guided chiefly by avarice and by self-interest, and who considers that the importation of slaves has a tendency to introduce heathenish ceremonies among his subjects. Sáhela Selássie is already fully sensible of the possibility of dispensing with slavery

as a domestic institution, by the adoption of European machinery, and of the practice of other Abyssinian states, where money is dispensed to the visiter in lieu of *dirgo*, or daily maintenance. His superstitions may be worked upon with the best effect by the fear of entailing the curses and imprecations of many thousand enslaved fellow-creatures who annually pass through his dominions; and his eyes have been opened to the fact, that the whole of these wretched beings become converts to Mohammadanism — a faith upon which every Abyssinian looks down with abhorrence. The same voice that at European intercession commanded the release of many hundred Galla prisoners of war, could at once order the abrogation of domestic slavery within the kingdom; but its abolition before the establishment of British commerce shall have rendered His Majesty independent of the slave-dealing Adaïel would be delusive. It would do harm instead of doing good; and whilst it led to little actual reduction of human misery, it would arouse the worst passions of the entire surrounding Mohammadan population. For Shoa is at this moment solely dependent upon the Danákil trader, not only for every description of foreign merchandize, but also for salt, which here constitutes the chief circulating medium of the realm; and the first inducement to the importation of this indispensable commodity, is found in the great profits derived from the traffic in slaves purchased at Abd el Russool.

In Shoa, too, every Christian subject is more or less interested in the continuance of slave importations; and notwithstanding that the trammels of the despot, who receives unbounded homage, render each in fact a bondsman, he is in no danger of being kidnapped and driven into slavery. No one would dare to disobey the royal fiat; but, involving as it must great personal hardship to all, it could not fail to be attended with universal loss of popularity to the monarch. No such difficulty would attend the formation of a treaty of suppression in the northern provinces of Christian Abyssinia, where slavery in the true acceptation of the term has no existence, excepting in so far as it is carried on by the Moslem traders, of whom both ruler and people are comparatively independent. Thus in Gondar and Tigré, where domestic slavery is neither practised nor advocated by prince or subject, the external traffic might readily be crushed, and with the greatest advantage, through the friendly sentiments entertained by the present patriarch.

The spiritual influence exerted by Abba Salama over the mind of all classes, high as well as low—the spell by which he holds his supreme power—is acknowledged by every province, however remote, which constitutes a remnant of the ancient Æthiopic empire. Access to hitherto sealed portions of the interior, by which the objects of humanity would not less be forwarded than those of commerce, science, and geography, can thus readily be obtained

through his assistance. They offer gold in return for the blessings of Christianity and civilization, and are believed to be accessible also from the coast of the Indian ocean. But it ought not to be forgotten in England, that, independently of other considerations, the surest hopes of working any favourable change in the present degraded state of the Abyssinian church, or of substantially promoting the views of philanthropy in Æthiopia Proper, must be considered to rest solely upon the good feeling, the potent influence, and the professed assistance of his holiness the Abuna, and that one better disposed is not likely ever to fill the episcopal throne at Gondar.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

COMMERCE WITH THE EASTERN COAST OF AFRICA.

The highlands included betwixt Abyssinia and the equator are unquestionably among the most interesting regions in Africa, whether viewed with reference to their climate, their soil, their productions, or their population. When the Æthiopic empire extended its sway over the greater part of the eastern horn, they doubtless supplied myrrh and frankincense to the civilized portions of the globe, together with the "sweet cane," mentioned by the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah, as being brought "from a far country." The slave caravan still affords a limited outlet to their rich produce; but the people, ignorant and naturally indolent, are without protection, and they possess no stimulus to industry. Vice alone flourishes amongst them, and their fair country forms the very hot-bed of the slave-trade. Hence arise wars and predatory violence, and hence the injustice and oppression which sweep the fields with desolation, bind in fetters the sturdy children of the soil, and cover the population with every sorrow, "with lamentation, and mourning, and woe."

It has already been remarked, that in early times,

as early probably as the days of Moses, the authority of Egypt extended deep into the recesses of Africa, and there is reason to believe, at later dates, far into those countries to the southward of Abyssinia which are accessible from the shores of the Indian Ocean. The eastern coast, from beyond the Straits of Bab el Mandeb, in all probability as far south as Sofala, the Ophir of Solomon, was well known to the enterprising merchants of Tyre, and to the sovereigns of Judea. In still later periods, the conquering Arabs, when they had become followers of the false prophet, extended their sway over all this coast as far as the twenty-fifth degree of south latitude. The remains of their power, of their comparative civilization, and of their religion, are found throughout to the present day; and notwithstanding that their rule had greatly declined when the Portuguese first landed on this part of Africa, four hundred years ago, it was still strong and extensive, and constant commercial intercourse was maintained with India.

No portion of the continent has, however, excited less modern interest than the eastern coast; owing perhaps to the extreme jealousy with which the Portuguese have guarded its approach, and withheld the limited information gained since the days of Vasco de Gama. The illiberal spirit of their government, both civil and ecclesiastic, has had the natural effect of degrading those maritime tribes placed in immediate juxta-position with the white settlers, and of effectually repelling the more spirited

and industrious inhabitants of the highlands, whose prudence and independence have baffled attempted inroads. Many a fair seat of peace and plenty, vitiated by the operation of the slave-trade, has been converted into a theatre of war and bloodshed; and the once brilliant establishments reared by the lords of India and Guinea, now scarcely capable of resisting the attacks of undisciplined barbarians, here, as elsewhere, exhibit but the wreck and shadow of their former vice-regal splendour.

Although free to all nations, the eastern coast, from Sofala to Cape Guardufoi, has in later years been little frequented by any, save the enterprising American, whose star-spangled banner is often found in parts where others would not deign to traffic; and who, being thus the pioneer through untried channels to new countries, reaps the lucrative harvest which they are almost sure to afford. English ships from India have occasionally visited the southern ports for cargoes of ivory and ambergris, but, in the absence of any rival, the Imám of Muscat is now, with his daily increasing territories, fast establishing a lucrative monopoly from Mombás and Zanzibar.

In most of the interior countries lying opposite to this coast, to the south of Shoa, the people unite with an inordinate passion for trinkets and finery, a degree of wealth which must favour an extensive sale of European commodities. In Enárea, Cáffa, Gurágué, Koocha, and Susa, especially, glass-ware,

false jewellery, beads, cutlery, blue calico, long cloth, chintz, and other linen manufactures, are in universal demand. That their wants are neither few nor trifling may be satisfactorily ascertained, from the fact that the sum of 96,000*l.*, the produce of the slave-trade from the ports of Bérbera, Zeyla, Tajúra, and Massowah, is only one item of the total amount annually invested in various foreign goods and manufactures, which are readily disposed of even at the present price of the monopolist; who being generally a trader of very limited capital, may be concluded to drive an extremely hard bargain for his luxurious wares.

It would be idle to speculate upon the hidden treasures that may be in store for that adventurous spirit who shall successfully perform the quest into these coy regions—for time and enterprize can alone reveal them. But it is notorious that gold and gold dust, ivory, civet, and ostrich-feathers, peltries, spices[1], wax, and precious gums, form a part of the lading of every slave caravan, notwithstanding that a tedious transport over a long and circuitous route presents many serious difficulties; and that the overreaching disposition of the Indian Banian and of the Arab merchant, who principally divide the spoils on the coast of Abyssinia, offer a very far

[1] Ginger is exported in great quantities from Gurágué; and amongst other indigenous spices, the *kurárima*, which combines the flavour of the caraway with that of the cardamom.

from adequate reimbursement for the toil and labour of transportation.

No quarter of the globe abounds to a greater extent in vegetable and mineral productions than tropical Africa. The extent to which it contributed to the trade of antiquity has been ably investigated by Mr. J. A. St. John, in his learned enquiry into the manners and customs of ancient Greece[1]. 'In the populous, fertile, and salubrious portions lying immediately north of the equator, the very highest capabilities are presented for the employment of capital, and the development of British industry. Coal has already been found, although at too great a distance inland to render it of any service without water communication; but we may reasonably infer that it exists in positions more favourable for the supply of the steamers employed in the navigation of the Red Sea; and I received the most positive assurances that it is to be obtained within a reasonable distance of Massowah. Cotton of excellent quality grows wild, and might be cultivated to any extent. The coffee which is sold in Arabia as the produce of Mocha is chiefly of wild African growth; and that species of the tea-plant which is used by the lower orders of the Chinese, flourishes so widely, and with so little care, that the climate to which it is indigenous would doubtless be found well adapted for the higher-flavoured and more delicate species so prized for foreign exportation.

[1] Vol. iii. chap. xiii.

Every trade must be important to Great Britain which will absorb manufactured goods and furnish raw material in return. Mercantile interests on the eastern coast might therefore quickly be advanced by increasing the wants of the natives, and then instructing them in what manner those wants may be supplied, through the cultivated productions of the soil. The present is the moment at which to essay this; and so promising a field for enterprise and speculation ought not to be neglected. The position of the more cultivated tribes inland, the love of finery displayed by all, the climate, the productions, the capabilities, the presumed navigable access to the interior, the contiguity to British Indian possessions, and the proximity of some of the finest harbours in the world, all combine inducements to the merchant, who, at the hands even of the rudest nation, may be certain of a cordial welcome.

If, at a very moderate calculation, a sum falling little short of 100,000*l.* sterling can be annually invested in European goods to supply the wants of some few of the poorer tribes adjacent to Abyssinia; and if the tedious and perilous land journey can be thus braved with profit to the native pedlar, what important results might not be anticipated from well-directed efforts, by such navigable access as would appear to be promised by the river Gochob? The throwing into the very heart of the country now pillaged for slaves a cheap and ample

supply of the goods most coveted, must have the effect of excluding the Mohammadan rover, who has so long preyed upon the sinews of the people; and this foundation judiciously built upon by the encouragement of cultivation in cotton and other indigenous produce, might rear upon the timid barter of a rude people the superstructure of a vast commerce.

At a period when the attention of the majority of the civilized world, and of every well-wisher to the more sequestered members of the great family of mankind, is so energetically directed towards the removal of the impenetrable veil that hangs before the interior, and fosters in its dark folds the most flagrant existing sin against nature and humanity, it could not fail to prove eminently honourable to those who, by a well-directed enterprize, should successfully overcome the obstacles hitherto presented by the distance, the climate, and the barbarity of the continent of Africa. But lasting fame, and the admiration of after-ages, are not the only rewards extended by the project. A rich mercantile harvest is assuredly in store for those who shall unlock the portals of the Eastern coast, and shall spread navigation upon waters that have heretofore been barren.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

NAVIGATION OF THE RIVER GOCHOB.

To put down the foreign slave-trade, without first devising honest occupation for a dense, idle, and mischievous population of Africa, would seal the death-warrant of every captive who, under the present system, is preserved as saleable booty. Hence it must be admitted, that to inculcate industry and to extend cultivation by voluntary labour, are indispensable stepping-stones towards the ultimate amelioration of a people who do not at present possess the elements for extended commerce. To create these would be to change the destinies of the Negro, by including him within the league of the rights of man; and habits of industry must rapidly raise him from savage ignorance to that state of improvement which is essential to fit him for the privileges of a freeman.

The present very limited exports of this immensely populous continent, which do not amount in value to those of Cuba, with only twelve hundred thousand inhabitants, must be reckoned among the chief causes of her misery and thraldom. Few, if any, of the commodities bartered with other nations

are the production of capital, labour, or industry, and in the minds of the whole population the ideas of prosperity and of a slave-trade are inseparable. But if all that is coveted could be placed within honest reach, in exchange for the produce of the soil, the hands which should cultivate it will never afterwards be sold.

"Legitimate commerce," writes Sir Fowell Buxton, "would put down the slave-trade, by demonstrating the superior value of man as a labourer on the soil, to man as an object of merchandize. If conducted on wise and equitable principles, it might be the precursor, or rather the attendant, of civilization, peace, and Christianity to the unenlightened, warlike, and heathen tribes, who now so fearfully prey upon each other to support the slave-markets of the New World; and a commercial system upon just, liberal, and comprehensive principles, which guarded the native on the one hand, and secured protection to the honest trader on the other, would therefore confer the richest blessings on a country so long desolated and degraded by its intercourse with the basest and most iniquitous portion of mankind."

The average cost of a seasoned slave in Cuba is 120*l.* sterling; but it has been seen that in Enárea and other parts of the interior he may be purchased for ten pieces of salt, equivalent to two shillings and a penny—for a pair of Birmingham scissors, or even for a few ells of blue calico. Hence it may be inferred that the hire of the freeman would be

in the same ratio; and if so, it is obvious that this cheap labour, applied to a soil as productive as any in the world, would ensure to African tropical produce the superiority in every market to which it might be introduced.

Able advocates of the cause of humanity have upon these grounds clearly demonstrated, that, in order to suppress completely the foreign traffic in human flesh, it is only necessary to raise, in any accessible point affording the readiest outlet, sugar, coffee, and cotton, and to throw these yearly into the market of the world, already fully supplied by expensive slave labour. The creation of this cheap additional produce would so depress the price current in every other quarter, that the external slave-trade would no longer be profitable, and would therefore cease to exist.

The baneful climate of Africa is the obstacle which has hitherto opposed the introduction of agriculture, and the chief object in seeking geographical information has been to discover some point whence the object may be accomplished with safety. That point is presented in the north-eastern coast, where, from no great distance inland to an unknown extent, the spontaneous gifts of nature are transcendently abundant—the people are prepared by misfortune to welcome civilized assistance—the soil is fertile and productive, and the climate, alpine and salubrious, is highly congenial to the European constitution.

All these countries are believed to be accessible from the Juba, more commonly called the Govind, which is said to rise in Abyssinia, and to be navigable in boats for three months from its mouth. Its *embouchure* is in the territories of the friendly sheikhs of Brava, seven in number, the hereditary representatives of seven Arab brothers, who were first induced to settle on that part of the coast by the lucrative trade in grain, gold, ambergris, ivory, rhinoceros' horns, and hippopotamus' teeth. They were formerly under the protection of Portugal; but even the remembrance of that state of things has nearly passed away from the present generation. From Mombás, which is the most northern possession of Syyud Syyud, the Imám of Muscat, the coast as far as the equator is in occupation of the Sowáhili, a quiet and intelligent race of Moorish origin, and thence to Zeyla, which is now in the hands of Sheikh Ali Shermárki, the entire population is Somauli. The climate, even so far south as Mombás, is notoriously good; and the government affords a striking contrast to that of the western coast, where the regions in corresponding latitudes are subject to bloody despotism, such as is submitted to by none but the ignorant savage.

Measures at once simple and profitable, might therefore be adopted by the purchase or rent of land on this river, which is conjectured to be the Gochob, and would seem to promise easy access to the very hotbed of slavery. It has been well re-

marked by M'Queen, in his Geographical Survey, that "rivers are the roads in the torrid zone;" and should the stream now under consideration fortunately prove fitted for navigation, the introduction through its means of the essential requisites to the happiness and the emancipation of the now oppressed continent, could not fail to confer the most inestimable advantages.

The power of Abyssinia, once so extended in this quarter, was known even to the Delta of the Niger. It was from the sovereigns of Benin that the Portuguese first heard of the glories of "Prester John;" and as it is quite certain that a communication did formerly exist, "by a journey of twenty moons," through the countries in the upper course of the Egyptian Nile, there seems no reason to doubt that it might be readily renewed. Of the salubrity of the regions in which all these streams take their source, no question can be entertained. Ptolemy Euergetes, when sovereign of Egypt, penetrated to the most southern provinces of Æthiopia, which he conquered, and he has described his passage to have been effected in some parts, over mountains deeply covered with snow.

Those portions of the continent which are blessed with the finest climate, and with the largest share of natural gifts, and which teem with a population long ravaged by the inroads of the kidnapper, must be of all others the most eminently fitted to receive, and the most capable of bringing to maturity, the

seeds which can alone form the elements of future prosperity. And what nation is better qualified to confer such inestimable gifts, or more likely to profit by them, when judiciously bestowed, than Great Britain? The most civilized nations are those which possess the deepest interest in the spread of civilization, and none more than herself are deeply interested in the speedy suppression of the traffic in human beings.

No beneficial change can ever be anticipated, so long as the population of the interior remain cut off from all communication with enlightened nations — so long as they are visited only by the mercenary rover, and are hemmed in by fanatic powers, whose policy it is to encourage this monstrous practice. The Mohammadans are not only traders for the sake of slaves almost exclusively, but they are, as respects the greater portion of interior Africa, jealous, reckless, commercial rivals. It is not, therefore, surprising that they should exert all the influence which they possess from the combination of avarice, ignorance, prejudice, and religion, to exclude foreign influence; and without roads, or any efficient means for the conveyance of heavy merchandise, it is not to be expected that the ignorant despot of the interior will ever think of making his slaves or his subjects cultivate produce of great bulk and laborious carriage, in order to procure in exchange articles which he requires, whilst with very trifling labour and still more

trifling expense, they can be driven even to the most remote market, and there sold or exchanged.

But few people are more desirous or more capable of trading than the natives of Africa; and the facility with which factories might be formed is sufficiently proved by experience in various parts of the continent. Abundance of land now unoccupied could be purchased or rented at a mere nominal rate, in positions where the permanent residence of the white man would be hailed with universal joy, as contributing to the repose of tribes long harassed and persecuted. The serf would seek honest employment in the field, and the chiefs of slave-dealing states, gladly entering into any arrangement for the introduction of wealth and finery, would, after the establishment of agriculture, no longer find their interest in the flood of human victims, which is now annually poured through the highlands of Abyssinia.

I trust that these remarks upon the importance of such a communication as the Gochob may prove to afford to the countries in which it is situated, will not be considered either tedious or superfluous. Much has been written upon the policy which has seen, in many a barbarous location, the future marts of a boundless and lucrative commerce—the centres whence its attendant blessings, knowledge, civilization, and wealth, would radiate amongst savage hordes. Here are no deserts, but nations already prepared for improvement, and countries gifted by

nature with a congenial climate, and with a boundless extent of virgin soil, where the indigo and the tea-plant flourish spontaneously, and where the growth of the sugar-cane and of every other tropical production may be carried to an unlimited extent—regions affording grain in vast superabundance, and rich in valuable staples—cotton, coffee, spices, ivory, gold-dust, peltries, and drugs. But although thus surrounded by natural wealth, and placed within reach of affluence and happiness, the denizens of these favoured regions imperatively require the fostering care of British protection, to become either prosperous, contented, or free.

CHAPTER XL.

THE SECOND WINTER IN SHOA.

ANOTHER dreary season of rain, and of mist, and of heavy fog, had now set in; the lance and the shield of the Christian had been suspended in the dark windowless hall, and the war-steed ranged loose over the swampy meadow. During three long months the weather seldom permitted us to quit our damp miserable habitation at Ankóber, but I found ample occupation in endeavouring to put into some kind of order the notes from which these three volumes have been prepared. My assistants were also busily engaged in the various departments which I had allotted to them, and in spite of the gloomy light afforded by oiled parchment, a highly valuable collection of maps, drawings, and reports, had been completed before any change was observable in the weather Within the memory of the oldest inhabitant, the floods had never continued longer nor with greater violence. Morning after morning the heavy white clouds still clung above the saturated metropolis. Every hollow footpath had been converted into a muddy stream, and each deep valley had become a morass, impassable to the equestrian; whilst the swollen Háwash had inun-

dated the lowlands for many miles on either side of its serpentine banks.

Amongst the few events which occurred to disturb the monotony of our second winter in Shoa, was the annual audience given, towards the close of July, by the king to the Adaïel and Hurrurhi, residing in the market town of Alio Amba. Our old acquaintance, Kalama Work, having been detected in practising extensive peculation, had first undergone imprisonment in the *madi beit*, under the watchful eye of Wolda Hāna, and was eventually stripped of his property, and turned forth upon the wide world a beggar. Abd el Yonag, the Hurrur consul, who possessed in eminent perfection the arts of fawning and flattery, had, during the *interregnum*, turned to good account his insatiable taste for power and intrigue. He was formally nominated to the vacant government, and when we entered the raised balcony occupied by the king, the wily old slave-dealer, duly girded with the silver badge of office and authority, occupied the disgraced governor's seat at the footstool of the throne.

Armed with creese, and spear, and shield, the kilted band whirled howling into the court-yard, performing their savage war-dance. The precincts of the palace rung to their wild yells; and he vivid pantomime of throat-cutting and disembowelment was enacted to the life, in all its pleasing varieties. "*Moot! moot! moot!*" shouted each prevailing

warrior of note, shaking his sun-blanched locks, and ominously quivering his heavy lance, as he sprang in turn to the front, for the approval of the Christian monarch. "Is he dead? Is he dead?" "*Buráhoo! Buráhoo!* you've slain him! you've slain him!" returned the turbaned pedlar, facetiously clapping his hands on behalf of his royal patron — "*Buráhoo! Buráhoo!*" and ere the hero of this gratifying applause had retired, another and another brave had commenced his vaunting exhibition in front of the sable ranks, or was in the act of ripping up the foe who in mock conflict had sprung like a tiger across his adversary's loins, to grasp him as in a vice betwixt the muscles of his thighs. The court-buffoon was meanwhile diligently plying his occupation, by capering through the ranks with his unsheathed reaping-hook, and chattering in ludicrous imitation of the Moslem barbarians — his successful mimicry eliciting shouts of applause, notwithstanding that the reality, as enacted in the hot valleys below, had, on more occasions than one, been calculated to leave no very agreeable recollections in the mind of the Amhára audience.

At the motion of the herald, the assembled warriors now squatted their meagre, wiry forms before the raised alcove, each resting upon his spear-staff, and peering over his shield, according to the undeviating custom of the Bedouin savage. "Are you all well? Are you well? Are you quite well?" repeated the dragoman who interpreted His Ma-

jesty's salutations.—"How have you passed your time? Are your wives and all your children happy, and are your houses prosperous? Have your flocks and your herds multiplied, and are your fields and your pastures covered with plenty?"—"*Humdu lillah! Humdu lillah!*" "Praise be unto God!" was the unvarying reply.—"How are you, and how have you been? We are the friends of Woosen Suggud, your father, who ruled before you, and we will always deal with you as our fathers dealt with your fathers who are now dead. We are near neighbours. May Allah keep our people and their children's children at peace the one with the other!" Cloths were now presented to the principal men, and oxen having been apportioned to their retainers, each rose in turn, and patted the extended hand of the monarch with his own palm; one atrocious old ruffian, who concluded the ceremony raising himself in his sandals and grasping the fingers of the king so firmly, that he had nearly succeeded in plucking him from his elevated throne.

His Majesty, although obviously little pleased at the practical joke, had sufficient command of temper to take it in good part, but no doubt inwardly congratulated himself upon the happy termination of the wild levee. It had been fully illustrative of the tact and diplomatic sagacity employed in the maintenance of ascendency over the more infractable portion of his nominal subjects, and in the cultivation of amicable political relations with the neighbouring states. Wulásma Mohammad, as chief

agent, sat in regal dignity on this important occasion, and his dragoman, a native of Argóbba, was the medium of communication. The throat of this man exhibited from ear to ear a conspicuous seam, pointed out by the by-standers as the work of his own hands. Great, indeed, must have been the desperation which at the present day could impel such an attempt at self-destruction on the frontiers of Shoa. One mile beyond, in any direction, would of a surety supply numbers of volunteers for the task, from amongst those whose throat-cutting proficiency had so creditably been displayed during the recent pantomime.

Early in the month of August, the festival of Felsáta brought a repetition of the customary skirmishes between the town's people and the slave establishment of the king. For the edification of a numerous concourse of spectators, the miry lane leading to the church of "Our Lady" was attacked and defended with heavy clubs, shod with rings of iron; and after a severe conflict, the servile invaders were finally driven from the field, with blood streaming from numerous broken heads, which were brought to the Residency to be repaired. During the fortnight's fast that ensued in celebration of the Assumption, the rough diversion was frequently repeated, and abstinence from food appeared to have soured the temper of the entire population. On the succeeding festival of the Transfiguration, styled "Debra Tábor," the capital was illuminated. Whilst boys, carrying flambeaux,

ran singing through the streets, every dwelling displayed such a light as its inmates could afford, —none, however, of the old cotton rags besmeared with impure bees'-wax shining very luminously through the thick drizzling mist.

One of the principal of the royal storehouses at Channoo, on the frontier, was at this period struck by lightning, and totally burnt to the ground. The king as usual was keeping fast at Machal-wans, and thither, according to custom, every nobleman and governor in the land flocked to offer condolence. Many were the long faces on the road, for the greatest consternation pervaded all classes; and the fat Wulásma in particular, on his way to break the dismal tidings to his despotic master, having the consequences of the late conflagration at Wóti still fresh in his recollection, was observed to be in a state of extreme mental perturbation and anxiety.

"Alas!" exclaimed the king, when, in accordance with etiquette, we contributed our mite of consolation—"Alas! that magazine was built by my ancestor Emmaha Yásoos. It measured six hundred cubits in length, and ninety spans in breadth, and it was piled with salt to the very roof. There is no salt in my country. I feared a rupture with the Adaïel, who bring it from below, and I therefore stored up large quantities that my people might never want. Now the lightning has taken all; but who can repine?—for it was the will of God."

CHAPTER XLI.

THE GOTHIC HALL.

The models and plans of palaces that had been from time to time prepared by Captain Graham, had imparted to the royal mind a new architectural impulse; and after much deliberation with himself, he had finally come to the resolution of expending the timber requisite towards the erection of a chaste Gothic edifice. In the selection of the design, His Majesty displayed unlooked-for taste; for although as a penman his talents rank immeasurably in advance of the most accomplished of his scriveners, his skill as an artist had proved very circumscribed. It was nearly exhausted in the delineation of a nondescript bird, perched upon a tree-top, and did with difficulty extend to the one-legged fowler, gun in hand, who was conjectured to be planning its destruction. At the royal desire, I had frequently executed likenesses of the court favourites, and they were invariably acknowledged with much merriment; but, although repeatedly urged, no persuasion could induce the despot to sit for his own, from a firm belief in the old superstition, that whosoever

should possess it, could afterwards deal with him as he listed.

"You are writing a book," he remarked to me on one occasion, with a significant glance, as I was in the act of completing a full-length portrait of himself, which I had contrived to make unobserved from his blind side—"I know this to be the case, because I never inquire what you are doing that they do not tell me you are using a pen, or else painting pictures. This is a good thing, and it pleases me. You will speak favourably of myself; but you shall not insert my portrait, as you have done that of the Negoos of Zingero." Such was the title with which His Christian Majesty was invariably pleased to dignify his heathen brother, Moselekatse, whose acquaintance he had made through the frontispiece to my "Wild Sports in Southern Africa."

The Abyssinians have from time immemorial expended an entire tree in the reduction to suitable dimensions of every beam or plank employed in their primitive habitations; and it is not therefore surprising that Sáhela Selássie should have been equally delighted and astonished at the economy of time, labour, and material attending the use of the cross-cut saw. From age to age, and generation to generation, the Æthiopian plods on like his forefathers, without even a desire for improvement. Ignorance and indolence confine him to a narrow circle of observation from which he is afraid to move. Strong prejudices are arrayed against the

introduction of novelties, and eternal reference is made to ancestral custom. But in a country where the absence of timber is so remarkable and inconvenient, the advantages extended by this novel implement of handicraft was altogether undeniable. "You English are indeed a strange people," quoth the monarch, after the first plank had been fashioned by the European escort. "I do not understand your stories of the road in your country that is dug below the waters of a river, nor of the carriages that gallop without horses; but you are a strong people, and employ wonderful inventions."

Meanwhile the platform required for the new building advanced slowly to completion. The crowd of idle applicants for justice who daily convened before the tribunal of "the four chairs" were pressed into the service; and whenever His Majesty returned from an excursion in the meadow, the entire cortége might be seen carrying each a stone before his saddle in imitation of the royal example. Early one morning Graham received a message from the impatient despot to announce that the day being auspicious, he was desirous of seeing one post at least erected without delay. Greatly to his satisfaction the door-frames, which had previously been prepared by the carpenters of my escort, were simultaneously raised; and it being ascertained that the sub-conservator of forests had neglected to make the requisite supplies of timber, the delinquent was, with his wife and family, sentenced to vacate his

habitation forthwith, and to bivouac *sub divo* during twenty days upon the Angollála meadow—a punishment not unfrequently inflicted for venial dereliction of duty, and attended during the more inclement seasons with no ordinary inconvenience.

But the endless succession of holydays, during which no work can be performed, interfered in a much greater degree with the completion of the rising structure—it being superstitiously imagined that any portion of a work erected on the festival of a saint, with the aid of edged tools, will infallibly entail a curse from above. No little delay arose also from the whims and caprices of His Majesty, who could never satisfy himself that the doors and windows occupied the proper places. On this subject his ideas wandered perpetually to the ruins of a certain palace on the banks of the Nile, which he had visited whilst hunting the wild buffalo—"It is overgrown with trees and bushes," was his lucid description, "and it has two hundred windows, and four hundred pillars of stone, and none can tell whence it came."

On lawful days, however, the soldiers continued to work as diligently as the quantities of hydromel would permit, with which they were supplied by the royal munificence; and at length the Gothic hall was complete. It had been amusing in the interim to watch the persevering industry of an unfortunate gun-man of the body-guard; who was constructing a hut immediately below the palace. Whensoever

the vigilant eye of the church permitted, he would add to the frail wall of his circular dwelling a few layers of loose stone which, with his own single labour, he had collected in the meadow; but each morning's dawn revealed to his sorrowing eyes some monstrous breach in the unstable fabric, which, like Penelope's web, was never nearer to completion, and his patience being fairly exhausted, he finally gave up the task in despair.

The novel style of architecture introduced by the Gyptzis, so immeasurably superior in elegance, stability, and comfort, to anything before witnessed in Shoa, and combining all these recommendations with so limited an expenditure of material, afforded an undeniable contrast to the adjacent tottering pile upon vaults on which Demetrius the Albanian had expended three years of labour. Beyond the rude fabrics of the neighbouring states, where the more common manufactures have attained a somewhat higher cultivation, the palace of the king can boast of no embellishment saving the tawdry trappings which decorate the throne—gaudy tapestries of crimson velvet loaded with massive silver ornaments, but ill in keeping with the clumsy mud walls to which they are appended, and serving to render the latter still more incongruous by so striking a contrast. But the new apartments were elegantly furnished throughout, and with their couches, ottomans, carpets, chairs, tables, and curtains, had assumed an aspect heretofore unknown

in Abyssinia. "I shall turn it into a chapel," quoth His Majesty, accosting Abba Ráguel, and patting the little dwarf familiarly upon the back—"What say you to that plan, my father?"

As a last finishing touch, we suspended in the centre hall a series of large coloured engravings, which the cathedral of Saint Michael might well have envied, for they represented the chase of the tiger in all its varied phases. The domestication of the elephant, and its employment in war, or in the pageant, had ever proved a stumbling-block to the king, who all his life had been content to reside in a house boasting neither windows nor chimneys, and who reigned not in the days when "the Negús, arrayed in the barbaric pomp of gold chains, collars, and bracelets, and surrounded by his nobles and musicians, gave audience to the ambassador of Justinian, seated in the open field upon a lofty chariot drawn by four elephants superbly caparisoned[1]." The grotesque appearance of the "hugest of beasts" in his hunting harness, struck the chord of a new idea. "I will have a number caught on the Robi," he exclaimed, "that you may tame them, and that I too may ride upon an elephant before I die." A favourite governor from a remote frontier province was standing meanwhile with his forefinger in his mouth gazing in mute amazement at the wonders

[1] Gibbon.

before him. "This place is not suited for the occupation of man," he at length exclaimed in a reverie of surprise, as the monarch ceased: — "this is a palace designed only for the residence of the Deity, and of Sáhela Selássie."

CHAPTER XLII.

THE "PRO REX OF EFÁT" IN TRIBULATION.

Although we had found small reason to be flattered with our first reception in the kingdom of Shoa, at the hands of a Christian ruler who had sought alliance with Great Britain, it was nevertheless matter of notoriety that no previous visiters had, under any circumstances, been treated with one-hundredth part of the same courtesy and condescension, or had experienced such unequivocal marks of confidence and favour. Formed on the most liberal scale, and supplied with all that was likely to add to its weight in such a country, the embassy was almost from the outset admitted to terms of perfect equality with the haughty despot, yet numberless diplomatic troubles were still interposed by the general ignorance of the many, and by the envy and jealousy of a few. No veil had been thrown over the deep-rooted enmity of the bigoted and powerful priesthood, who, to serve their own sinister purposes, cunningly contrived to construe the costly gifts of the British Government into tribute to the illustrious descendant of the house of Solomon; but the assertion carried its own refutation. In a weak moment

Comus Unquies, "the king's strong monk," so far forgot the dignity due to his station, as to barter his bishop's staff to the heretic Gyptzis for a pair of Birmingham scissors! European medicines had rescued three thousand patients from the jaws of death; and improved intercourse with the monarch finally dispelled the jealousy created in a suspicious breast by the treasonable designs imputed to the foreign visiters, who were found to have brought no king or queen in a box, and to entertain designs neither upon the sceptre nor upon the church of Æthiopia.

The opposition of inimical functionaries dressed in fleeting authority, exposed us to a train of persecutions, trifling perhaps in themselves, but amounting in the aggregate to more than martyrdom. Few of the commands issued were obeyed so much in the spirit as to the letter. *Eshee*, or *Busanye*[1], although doubtless signifying assent, did not always bring compliance with even the most trifling application for assistance. The king was too polished to say "No," when he had inwardly resolved to do nothing; and an uneducated despot, who has never known any law but his own absolute will, and who lives for himself alone; who considers and claims as his property every thing in the country over which he wields the arbitrary sceptre, and whose only idea of wealth, power, and happiness, is centered in individual existence, can so ill understand the wants of others,

[1] i. e. "Very well."

that His Majesty's offences towards his guests, founded in Oriental suspicion, might rather be termed sins of omission than of commission.

Covetous, and eager for novelties, Sáhela Selássie never fails to wish for every thing that comes under his observation, but, like a child with a new toy, soon weary of looking at the bauble, though still vain of its possession, he casts it aside to be hoarded in the mouldy vaults of some distant magazine. The savage is the same under every possible form, and in every grade and position—the one stealing what he covets, whilst another, seeking plausible pretexts, obtains possession through low cunning and stratagem. Among such a nation of beggars as the people of Southern Abyssinia, it was not always easy to satisfy the rapacity of fastidious extortioners. All wanted "pleasing things"—many demanded dollars to defray the cost of slaves that they had purchased, but for whom they could not pay; and for months after my arrival, requisitions for our own private property were unceasing on the part also of the monarch.

Neither compulsory measures nor direct applications were ever employed; but the means resorted to were not the less certain of success. With that duplicity and want of candour which ever marks uncivilized man, he was wont to send underhand communications, or meanly to depute his emissaries to reveal his desires and his intentions in a manner which, in so despotic a land, could leave no doubt

of authenticity; and an offer of the article coveted being forthwith made, His Majesty hesitated not, in the presence of his agents, to deny all cognizance of the transaction, or to swear by the saints that he never sought the property tendered for his acceptance. Persuasion would not induce him to receive it at once, and thus to terminate the matter; but no sooner had it been removed from his sight, than his creatures were again at work with even greater activity than before; and rude taunts of breach of promise, with not-to-be-mistaken hints, veiled under the cloak of friendship, were certain to instigate a second and a third offer, which invariably elicited an avowal of the disinclination entertained to "receive the property of his children," but uniformly ended in his accepting it "as a free gift from the heart," acknowledged in all gratitude by the benediction—"God restore it to thee, my son! May the Lord glorify and reward thee!"

Chief of all the sycophants who bask in the favour of the monarch, may be ranked Wulásma Mohammad, who, in finesse, plausibility, and the manifold specious devices that are employed to cover total want of sincerity, can find no equal in the kingdom of Shoa. Lavish in professions of friendship, he never suffered to escape an opportunity of gratifying his inwardly-cherished animosity. Presents were frequently exchanged—the sugar-cane and the bunch of green gram, which are the

symbols of hearts knit together in the bonds of unity, arrived with the same regularity as the week, coupled, of course, with a description of some "pleasing thing" that was not to be found in Góncho. The lemon, denoting by its aromatic fragrance the beauties of permanent amity, was ever sure to follow the receipt of the desired article. Professions daily grew more profuse, and complimentary inquiries, which constitute the very essence of friendship, waxed more and more frequent; but although the regard entertained "amounted even to heaven and earth," and although every aid and assistance was volunteered, no packet of letters ever arrived to the address of the Gyptzis, neither did any courier ever depart for the sea-coast without being subjected to a tedious detention on the frontier at the hands of the despotic state-gaoler.

On the first of these occasions, the king, before sending the packet to the Residency, had taken the trouble of breaking the seal of every individual cover, with his own royal fingers; and a protest having been entered against a procedure so utterly foreign to European ideas of propriety, His Majesty inquired, with well-feigned simplicity, "Of what use should my children's letters be to me, who understand not their language?" Remonstrances were in like manner made to the Abogáz touching his interference in such manners; but as the crafty old fox screened himself behind total ignorance of the value attached to written documents, and

volunteered better behaviour, the subject was set at rest.

But although letters were now thoroughly understood to be held in higher estimation even than fine gold from Gurágué, the evil, far from being abated, became greater and greater, until at last it was no longer to be borne. Promises made, were made only to be broken; and a serious complaint was at last carried to the throne at Angollála, representing that another packet had been secreted during an entire fortnight in the fortified vaults of Góncho. After stoutly denying all knowledge of it, until convicted by incontrovertible evidence, and then declaring it to be deposited, for safety-sake, in the custody of his brother Jhália, who was absent on the frontier, the Wulásma was commanded to set out forthwith upon the quest, and to return at his peril empty-handed. "Our friendship has ceased for ever," muttered the burly caitiff betwixt his closed teeth as he descended the ladder—"for through your means the king hath become wroth with his servant." "Let his friendship go into the sea," quoth His Majesty, who had overheard this appalling announcement—"Is not he an accursed Moslem? Look only to me. Have I not always told you that my people are bad? Ye have travelled far into a strange land, and are to Sáhela Selássie even as his own children. Ye have no relative but me."

The escape of the rebel Medóko had formerly led

to the suspension of the Abogáz from rank and office for a period of two years, during which he danced attendance upon the monarch with shoulders bared, as is the wont of the disgraced noble. His troubles had now returned. "My ancestors owed a debt of gratitude to Mohammad's father," continued His Majesty, after a pause, "and I would fain overlook his faults; but this insolence is no longer to be borne. I have removed the drunkard from office, confiscated his goods and chattels, and by the death of Woosen Suggud, I swear, that unless you intercede, there can be no hope of his restoration to favour."

Down came the ex-Wulásma in a furious passion, boiling with old hydromel, and flushed with his rapid ride:—"How should I know that you wanted these vile letters?" he exclaimed, throwing the packet scornfully upon the ground—"I have done nothing. What offence have I committed, that I am thus to suffer through your means?—There is a proverb, that 'the dog of the house is faithful to its master, whereas he who cometh from beyond is worse than a hyena.'"

But a week had wrought a wonderful change in the sentiments of the humbled grandee, whose beeves were indeed grazing in the royal pastures, whilst his jars of old mead reposed in the royal cellars. He at whose sullen nod the subjects of Efát quailed, and whose presence was as an incubus to the state-prisoners in Góncho, had been, at the

representation of a foreigner, stripped of wealth and power, and, in accordance with the usage of the country, was now fain to wait during a succession of days upon those whom he had injured. Seating himself at the door of the tent in sackcloth and ashes, he sent in two friends, who came, according to the custom of the country, to serve as mediators. "Behold, I am reduced to the condition of a beggar," was his abject message, "and have no support but in your intercession. My children are deprived of their bread, and they starve through the faults of their father."

The Commander-in-chief of the Body Guard was spokesman on behalf of the caitiff. He brought me, as a *mamálacha*, a huge Sanga horn, filled to the brim with the liquor that he loved, and ushered himself in with his customary string of complimentary enquiries, "*Endiet aderachoon? Ejegoon dahenaderachoon? Dahena sanabatachoon? Dahena karamoon? Ejegoon dahena natchoon?*" "How have you passed the night? Have you rested very well? Have you been quite well since our last interview? How have you spent the rainy season? Are you in perfect health?"

"Half the people of Hábesh," he resumed, in his husky voice, when each of these points had been satisfactorily disposed of—"have ears like a hill, and they cannot hear—the residue are liars. Furthermore, one-half are thieves and drunkards, and the remainder are cowards." There was no

refuting the arguments adduced in support of this position, and his eloquence proved quite irresistible. A solemn oath was therefore administered upon the Korán, by which the suppliant, who united in his own person all the attributes embraced in this able classification, became pledged never again to interfere with messengers bearing letters to or from the low country. His pardon was finally obtained; and he was once more invested with the silver sword of office: nor is it easy to determine whether the disgrace or the restoration of the fat frontier functionary created the greater sensation throughout the realm.

"'What can you expect from that besotted old man?" inquired Ayto Melkoo, who had been a silent spectator of all that passed, and who hated both the Abogáz and his mediator with equal intensity. "Did you never hear that the Negoos was once displeased with me, and that I passed a few months beneath the grates at Góncho; and furthermore, that when the royal order came to set me at large, the State-Gaoler was drunk, and never thought again of his prisoner for a full fortnight? *Sáhela Selássie ye moot!* May the king die if it be not so!—the infidel may swear as long as he pleases, ay, and take his sacred book to witness; but how can you suppose that he will ever be able to think of these letters of yours?"

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE BEREAVEMENT.

A CALAMITY shortly afterwards overtook the Master of the Horse, whose spouse—a gift from the monarch to his faithful subject—was seized with alarming influenza, and became an object of universal attention. The first intimation of the disorder being serious was received from himself, when he came one morning to Graham's tent, in order to perform the interesting operation of shaving with a notched razor that he invariably patronized, and also to demand how it occurred that our inquiries were not more frequent. The not dispatching couriers daily to ascertain how each of your acquaintance fares and has rested, is perhaps the greatest offence that can be committed against Abyssinian etiquette. "Send to me" is a caution invariably given; and such being an indispensable ceremony when people are believed to be well, what must not be exacted when it is supposed that they are invalids? If hourly inquiries be not made, the best friends are sure to become the worst; and in every case the amount of real solicitude felt, is estimated by the frequency of "amicable correspondence."

"The patient's uvula has been cleverly plucked out with a silken thread," observed the visiter exultingly, when his toilet was happily completed:—"the thorax has been well scarified, and furthermore, we are giving *ya medur oqmboi*[1]. This medicine is infallible; but remember," he added, lowering his voice, and looking suspiciously round to see that no eaves-dropper profited by the wisdom he was about to impart in confidence—"remember that it must be gathered by a finger on which there is a silver ring, or, by Michael, it possesses no virtue whatever."

The good lady did not, however, long stand in need either of treatment or inquiry. She closed her bright eyes shortly after swallowing the infallible nostrum, administered by her quack husband in a jorum of oatmeal gruel, stirred with honey and rancid butter to such a consistency that the spoon would stand—and death left her barely time for confession and absolution.

Every priest in the neighbourhood was instantly called in to the rescue; and the *enchifchif*[2] and *máteb* having been immersed in water, and restored to the body, the sacrament was administered; and under the blazing light of the torch, prayers were chanted for the soul of the deceased until the morning dawned. Then commenced the frantic shrieks of the female

[1] Cucumis Africanus, Linn.
[2] i. e. Belt of charms and amulets.

crowd that flocked to the house of mourning. Cloths were torn in shreds from the bosom, and the skin plucked from the temples, whilst the low moaning dirge was at frequent intervals interrupted by the hysterical sob of some new arrival, who came to add her voice to the dismal coronach, and to excite renewed bursts of lamentation.

Preceded by the gay orange umbrellas of the church of the "Covenant of Mercy," the funeral procession wound up the palace-hill. A pall of printed Surat chintz, supported by six bearers, was waved alternately with a fanning motion, whilst a numerous train of mourners followed, with loud wails, all having their hands clasped behind their neck in token of the triumph obtained by Death over Sin. The corpse was laid in the sacred edifice, surrounded by twelve lighted tapers betokening purity of life; and when these were nearly consumed, they were lowered with the bier into the sepulchre. The head was laid to the west, in order that on the morn of resurrection the face might be towards the rising sun. A quantity of frankincense was deposited in the grave; and a copy of the book styled *Lefáfa Zádik*, "The supplication of Righteousness," having been placed on the body, the mortal clay was returned whence it came, "ashes to ashes, and dust to dust."

Ecclesiastics alone possess the privilege of a last resting-place within the walls of the church, or on the eastern side, four paces from the porch. The

aristocracy occupy the north, and warriors, women, and children, the south and west. All who die without confession or absolution are either interred by the highway-side or in some unconsecrated ground. Governors, men of rank, and all wealthy commoners who have not during life worked in wood, iron, or precious metals, are covered in the sepulchre with the green branches of the juniper; but smiths and artificers being regarded as sorcerers, every care is taken to keep them under ground when once deposited, to which end great stones are heaped over the body, and the earth is well trampled and secured.

Funeral obsequies concluded, the dirge of mourning, as usual, gave place to the notes of the violin, for harpers and fiddlers usually attend to the last resting-place the mortal remains of the great, and exert their utmost endeavours to raise the spirits of the return party by the liveliest airs. At the funeral feast which followed, oxen and sheep were freely slaughtered, and charity was liberally distributed, in order that *requiems* might be chanted during forty consecutive days for the soul of the departed.

It has been shown that the Abyssinian Christian, whilst execrating Mohammadanism, and forswearing all its abominations, can take unto his bosom four wives and more, and that the solemnization of matrimony is almost the only occasion on which the priest is not called in. Such had ever

been the case in the house of the Master of the Horse, who was nevertheless inconsolable under his present bereavement. Certain malicious whispers had flown abroad, to the effect that applications of the cudgel were sometimes resorted to by the epicure in support of his marital authority; but whether true or without foundation, these scandalous tales were known to have been circulated by Dinkoo, a mischief-making brat, with the falsest of tongues, and the offspring of one whose divorce, from incompatibility of temper, had left the deceased undisputed mistress of the premises, whereas of the matchless "*Etagai nya*," now no more, the neighbours were ever wont to exclaim, "Where shall you find her equal?"

At the appointed season, Graham and myself went in compliance with Abyssinian custom, to pay a visit of condolence, after having with considerable difficulty succeeded in shaking off the attentions of the court buffoon, who, with his wonted politeness, exerted somewhat *mal-à-propos* to so melancholy an occasion, insisted upon the exercise of his ingenuity in the comic drama. The widower, enveloped in a black woollen mantle, was seated in a gloomy corner, the very personification of mourning—his temples deeply scarified with his little finger nail, as were those also of the wrinkled old woman who wept beside him. In an opposite corner, equally the victim of grief, and supported by the family priest with cross, crutch, and cowl, sat Marietta,

a fat daughter of the former unfortunate union, who, like her mother, had been wedded and divorced, and having taken shelter again under her father's roof, was now sobbing aloud.

"God hath taken her," said one of the guests, breaking silence after the conclusion of the customary salutations. "The life of man is in His hand."

"Alas!" sobbed the bereaved, "that it had pleased Heaven to spare her until after you had left Abyssinia, that I alone might have found cause for affliction. Who could prepare *shiro*, and *wotz*, and *dilli*, like Etagainya? When was the house ever destitute of *quanta* or of *qualima*[1]? and who ever asked for *tullah* or for *tedj*, that she did not reply, '*Malto*,' There is abundance? '*Waiye*, *waiye*,' Woe is me. Where shall I find her equal? But there could have been no ring on the finger that gathered the *meddánit*!"

[1] *Shiro*, a sauce composed of peas or lentils boiled with grease and spices. *Wotz*, another, consisting of grease and red pepper. *Dilli*, a third abominable condiment. *Quanta*, sun-dried flesh. *Qualima*, sausages.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE GREAT ANNUAL FORAY.

ANOTHER Abyssinian year had floated away upon the stream of time, and again the return of spring had been celebrated by the green fillet of *enkotátach*, by the tournament in the bright meadows of Debra Berhán, and by the plaintive ditty of the king's Gurágués, who, with yellow garlands of the cross-flower wreathed among their raven tresses, once more chanted away their three days of privileged inebriety. As September drew towards a close, it had been confidently predicted that the rain would terminate according to its "covenant;" but it still poured on with unabated violence, and the review of Máskal was achieved under a pitiless deluge, which exerted its best endeavours both to mar the pageant, and to extinguish the evening bonfire raised in honour of St. Helena.

But the beat of the *nugáreet*, and the voice of the herald beneath the solitary tree at Angollála, proclaimed the great annual foray as heretofore; and the plain below the palace-hill was soon dotted with the black woollen tents of the leaders of cohorts. There were the governors of Bulga and of Mentshar,

and of Morát and Morabeitie, and Efrata and Antzochia, and of Mahhfood and of Shoa Méda, with all their subordinates, each surrounded by his own retainers; and the rear division of this feudal host was placed under the command of Besuenech, now governor of Giddem, the father of the king's grand-nephew, who fell the preceding year upon the fair plains of Germáma.

Led on to victory by the holy ark of St. Michael, the great crimson umbrellas streamed again through the barrier wall at the head of the Christian chivalry. Twenty thousand troopers pursued the route of the Sertie Lake to the Metta Galla, occupying the plains immediately contiguous to the valley of Finfinni, who were now the victims marked out for spoliation. The despot had so invariably passed this tribe without offering any molestation, that the heathen were little prepared for the thunderbolt that was about to fall, and of which the first intimation was afforded in the simultaneous invasion of the entire district. Overwhelmed by the torrent of desolation which had so suddenly burst in, four thousand five hundred Gentiles of all ages were butchered by the "soldiers of Christ," and of these the greater number were shot from trees that they had ascended in the vain hope of eluding observation. Three hapless individuals were thus barbarously destroyed by the hands of Sáhela Selássie, who for the first time led his troops to the summit of the mountain Entótto—the ancient capital of

Æthiopia—and, taking formal possession, appointed the arch-rebel Shambo to the government, under the title of "*Shoom* of all Gurágué."

Forty-three thousand head of cattle were on this occasion swept away to replenish the royal pastures, and the rich prize had been obtained with the loss of only nine of the king's liege subjects. Of the heroes who fell, one was torn by a lion in the deep juniper forest, and another basely assassinated by his comrade in arms, whose disfigured corse was subsequently left in retribution to the hyenas; whilst a third, a priest of extraordinary piety, and the father of the young page Besábeh, was transfixed by the spear of a Pagan who sat concealed amid the branches of a tree, beneath which the holy man rode in a rash attempt to secure a fugitive. The king's Master of the Horse wore the vaunting green *saréti* for having achieved the capture of a child scarce five years of age; and upwards of one thousand captives, chiefly women and young girls, swelled the barbaric pomp of triumphal entry to Angollála.

I considered that the opportunity had again arrived, when a remonstrance from the Embassy would promote the release of these unfortunate slaves; and after reminding His Majesty of his noble conduct with respect to the prisoners taken during the preceding foray, I entreated him not to tarnish, in the eyes of the civilized world, the reputation he had acquired for mercy, but to prove, by his present

conduct, that he was indeed influenced by the true principles of Christianity. Under Providence, my application was again crowned with success, and with a few exceptions, all were liberated without ransom. "I listen to your words," said His Majesty, as he issued the fiat of release, "in order that the name of Sáhela Selássie may not be broken."

Sad indeed are the atrocities perpetrated by the undisciplined armies of Æthiopia, when disputing the abstruse mysteries of Abyssinian divinity, or seeking, in the relentless fury of religious hate, to exterminate a heathen and stranger nation by a series of crusades, undertaken as an acceptable vindication of the sacred symbol of Christianity.

> "Her badge of mercy blazons half their shields;
> Sword hilts are fashion'd as memorials of it:
> This sign of man's forgiveness leads to battle!
> Whilst every tyrant hangs its ensign out,
> In scorn of justice, from his battlements;
> Mail'd prelates march before it to the field—
> Priest fights with priest, and both sides under it!
> This sign and pledge of mercy!"

The people of Shoa have fully adopted that spirit of merciless destruction which impelled the Israelites to destroy their enemies from the face of the earth. Considering themselves the lineal descendants of those heroes of ancient history who were arrayed against the enemies of the Lord, they are actuated by the same motives and feelings which led the bands of Judah to the massacre. The foe

is a Pagan, who does not fast, nor kiss the church, nor wear a *máteb*. All feelings of humanity are thrown to the winds; and a high reward in heaven is believed to await the king and the blood-thirsty soldier for the burning of the hamlet, the capture of the property, and the murder of the accursed Gentile. The words of absolution from the mouth of the Father Confessor usher in the ruthless slaughter; and the name of the Most High is wantonly employed to consecrate the ensuing scenes of savage atrocity.

That the minds of the people should not be more disturbed and alienated from agricultural pursuits, by the continual military expeditions which they are thus called upon to make, cannot fail to appear extraordinary. Probably the selfishness of the despot, in his appropriation of the lion's share of the spoil, has exerted a salutary influence in checking innate restlessness; and the subject has been instructed in a rough school, that there is more profit to be derived from holding the plough than from wielding the sword: for it is certainly the fact, that when the foray is over, the war-horse is turned loose in the meadow, and the partizan willingly returns to his peaceful avocations in the field. But these campaigns bring annually a repetition of the most atrocious and monstrous barbarity, and none who have witnessed the unhallowed proceedings of the Amhára warrior, can fail to offer up a fervent prayer that the time may be hastened,

when nations shall be knit together in the bonds of love, and when true Christianity shall reign paramount in every heart.

December had now commenced, but a dense gloomy mist still enveloped the hill of Anko, and torrents of rain continued to deluge the country, at a season when the smiling sun had been wont to shine over the land. The fair face of heaven was utterly obscured. The ripe crops lay rotting upon the ground; and as the inhabitants waded with difficulty through the deep mire which filled every street and lane of the capital, the exchange of mournful salutations was followed by a foreboding shake of the head at the daily increasing price of provisions. The season was unusually rigorous, and the soaked firewood sputtering upon the hearth, gave not out one atom of genial heat. On the bleak summit of the Abyssinian alps every thing was cold and clammy to the touch; and a searching wind, creeping up the damp sides of the hill, entered at each crevice in the mud wall, and rendered the situation of the inmates of the frail houses even more miserable than usual.

As the evening of the 6th of December closed in, not a single breath of air disturbed the thick fog which still brooded over the mountain. A sensible difference was perceptible in the atmosphere, but the rain again commenced to descend in a perfect deluge, and for hours pelted like the discharge of the bursting water-spout. Towards morn-

ing there came on a violent thunder-storm, and for some minutes the entire scene was fearfully illuminated by the dazzling fire of heaven; and every rock and cranny re-echoed from the succeeding crash of the hurtling thunder. Deep darkness again settled over the mountain. Suddenly the earth groaned and trembled to its very centre: the hill reeled and tottered like a drunken man; and a heavy rumbling noise, like the passage of artillery wheels, was followed by the shrill cry of mortal despair.

Dreadful indeed were the consequences of this shock. "The earth, saturated with moisture, had slidden like an avalanche from the steep rugged slopes, and huge boulders, tilted from their muddy beds, were thrown into the glens below. Houses and cottages were buried in the dark *débris*, or shattered to fragments by these monstrous masses bounding on their course with terrific rapidity. Large trees were torn from their roots, and daylight presented to the eyes of the affrighted inhabitants a strange scene of ruin.

Perched upon the apex of the conical peak, the palace had, on the preceding evening, frowned over the capital in all the security of its numerous encircling palisades; but now, shorn of their bristling protection, those buildings that had not been overthrown, stood naked and exposed. Twenty open breaches, as though heavy batteries had been playing for a fortnight on the devoted hill, laid bare

the approaches to the very porch of the banqueting-hall; and palings and palisades, forced from their deep foundations, lay broken and mingled together, strewed over the entire face of the eminence. The roads along the scarp were completely obliterated. Tall green shrubs reclined with their roots reversed among the wreck; and not one vestige of the fragile tenements could be discovered in the bare earthy tracts which disfigured the mountain-side, and marked the disastrous course of the treacherous slip.

The more vigilant inmates had, with the loss of all their little property, found barely time to rush from their houses, and huddled together in shivering groups totally denuded of clothing, had passed the remnant of the night in all the pangs of cold and terror; whilst in the market-place lay extended the stark discoloured bodies of numerous victims that had been already extricated from the slimy ruins, and were placed in the *Aráda* for recognition by surviving relatives, if any there were. The shrieks of the mourners added to the distress of the scene. The hymn of entreaty rose high in the mist from every church throughout the town; and bands of priests, carrying the holy cross, marched in solemn procession through the miry streets, beating their breasts and calling aloud upon Saint Michael the Archangel, and upon Mary the mother of the Messiah, to intercede for them in this the day of their affliction.

Sweeping desolation had spread for miles along the great range: houses with their inmates and household gear had been scattered in fragments over the mountain-side; and the voice of wailing from the green hill-top and from the sheltered nook, announced the many victims that were thus immaturely buried in the dark bosom of the earth. The destruction varied considerably according to situation and locality. Some villages were entirely smothered under the descending tons of heavy wet soil, and the inhabitants of others grieved only for their cattle, their crops, and their farm-steading; but the loss of life and property was altogether immense; and although the tremulous shock had been before frequently experienced, a similar to the present calamity had not befallen the country within the memory of man.

For many nights afterwards, as the thick mist still continued to enfold the mountain in its dark shroud, and the sloppy rain plashed heavily over the denuded rocks, the air at the close of each dull evening was filled with the plaintive sounds of hymn and prayer. The deep voice of the priesthood pealed incessantly from the churches; and groups of bewildered females, collected in every corner of the streets, bowed themselves to the ground, whilst calling in strangely wild cadence upon the Virgin, who is the Mediator, and upon all the saints and guardian angels, to preserve the believers in Christ from impending ruin—for the wise men who deal in

sorcery had proclaimed that the present throe was only the harbinger of the wrath of Heaven, which would one day sweep the high mountain of Anko with all her inhabitants utterly from the face of the earth.

CHAPTER XLV.

LIBERATION OF THE PRINCES OF THE BLOOD-ROYAL OF SHOA.

Humanity to his own subjects must be considered a distinguishing feature in the character of the reigning despot. He is ignorant, but not stupid—to his foes fierce, but not implacable; and although his manifold good qualities are sullied by the part he sustains in the odious traffic in his fellow-men — a moral plague which has by its baneful influence contaminated the whole of this quarter of the globe —he had, on more occasions than one, evinced an unlooked-for readiness to open his eyes to his errors. Possessed of faults inseparable from the absolute semi-barbarian, he had, nevertheless, been found mild, just, clement, and almost patriarchal in his government:—he is a monarch whom experience has proved worthy to reign over a better people, and to be possessed of an understanding and of latent virtues requiring nought save cultivation to place him, in a moral and intellectual point of view, immeasurably in advance of other African potentates.

Whilst indulging in the agreeable conviction that the endeavours of the British Embassy had been successful in arousing a monarch, who exercises so

wide an influence over the destinies of surrounding millions, to a sense of the wickedness and degradation attaching in civilized lands to barter in the flesh and blood of our fellow men, it occurred to me that he might be exhorted, with the best prospect of success, to break through the barbarous precautionary policy under which those members of the royal house who possess a contingent claim to the crown, and in other Christian realms would hold the highest offices and honours within its gift, had, through every generation since the days of the son of David, been doomed to chains in a living grave. And from the fortunate fact of the issue male of the present reign being limited to two, I derived the pleasant hope, that if a statute so jealously guarded during nearly three thousand years, could now for once be infringed, it would not, in all probability, be revived on the monarch's demise.

Entertaining the liveliest fears of death, his manifold superstitions were ever the most easily awakened during sickness, when the actions of his past life crowded up in judgment before him. It was on these occasions that, in order to quiet his conscience, he made the most liberal votive offerings to the church and to the monastery, and that he gained the greatest victories over his deep-rooted avarice; and it was on these occasions, therefore, that the chord of his latent good feeling might obviously be touched with the happiest result to the cause of humanity.

That singular blending of debauchery and devotion which marks the royal vigils, has seriously impaired a constitution naturally good. During a long succession of years the Psalms of David and the strongest cholera mixture have equally shared the midnight hours of the king; and although scarcely past the meridian of life, he is subject to sudden spasmodic attacks of an alarming character. In one of these his restoration had been despaired of both by the priests and the physicians; and the voice of wailing and lamentation already filled the precincts of the palace.

Scarcely was it light ere a page came to my tent with an urgent summons to the sick chamber. We found the despot pale and emaciated, with fevered lip and bloodshot eye, reclining upon a couch in a dark corner of the closed veranda, his head swathed in white cloth, and his trembling arms supported by bolsters and cushions. Abba Raguel, the dwarf Father Confessor, with eyes swollen from watching, was rocking to and fro, whilst he drowsily scanned an illuminated Æthiopic volume, containing the lives of the martyrs; and in deep conversation with the sick monarch was a favourite monk, habited like an Arab Bedouin in a black goat's hair cameline and a yellow cowl, but displaying the sacred cross in his right hand. The loud voice of the priesthood arose in boisterous song from the adjacent apartment: strings of red worsted had been tied round the monarch's thumbs and great toes;

and the threshold of the outer chamber was bedewed with the still moist blood of a black bullock, which, when the taper of life was believed to be flickering in the socket, had been thrice led round the royal couch, and, with its head turned towards the East, was then slaughtered at the door, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

"My children," said His Majesty in a sepulchral voice, as he extended his burning hand towards us—"behold, I am sore stricken. Last night they believed me dead, and the voice of mourning had arisen within the palace walls, but God hath spared me until now. Tell me the medicine for this disease."

A febrifuge having been prepared, we attempted to follow the etiquette of the Abyssinian court, by tasting the draught prescribed; but the king, again extending his parched hand, protested against this necessity. "What need is there now of this?" he exclaimed reproachfully: "do not I know that you would administer to Sáhela Selássie nothing that could do him mischief? My people are bad; and if God had not mercy on me to restore me, they would deal evil with you—and to strip you of your property would even take away your lives."

I had oftentimes complimented the king upon the mildness and equity of his rule, and upon the readiness with which he gave ear to intercession on behalf of the slave. The implicit confidence which

had supplanted all fear and suspicion in the breast of His Majesty, now favoured a still stronger appeal to his humanity, to his magnanimity, and to his piety. I urged him to take into favourable consideration the abject condition of his royal brothers —victims to a tyrannical and unnatural statute, the legacy of a barbarous age, which for centuries had resulted in such incalculable misery and mischief. I reminded him that it belongs unto those who wield the sceptre to triumph over prejudices; and that by the liberation of many innocent captives, of whom, though possessing the strongest claim that blood can give, he had perhaps scarcely even thought during his long and prosperous reign, he would perform an act alike acceptable to Heaven, and calculated to secure to himself on earth an imperishable name.

"And I will release them," returned the monarch, after a moment's debate within himself. "By the holy Eucharist I swear, and by the church of the Holy Trinity in Koora Gádel, that if Sáhela Selássie arise from this bed of sickness, all of whom you speak shall be restored to the enjoyment of liberty."

The sun was shining brighter than usual, through a cloudless azure sky, when we all received a welcome summons to witness the redemption of this solemn pledge. The balcony of Justice was tricked out in its gala suit; and priests, governors, sycophants, and courtiers, crowded the yard, as the

despot, restored to health, in the highest spirits and good-humour, took his accustomed seat upon the velvet cushions. The mandate had gone forth for the liberation of his brothers and his blood relatives, and it had been published abroad, that the royal kith and kindred were to pass the residue of their days free and unfettered near the person of the king, instead of in the dark cells of Góncho.

There were not wanting certain sapient sages who gravely shook the head of disapproval at this fresh proof of foreign influence and ascendency, and who could in nowise comprehend how the venerable custom of ages could be thus suddenly violated. The introduction of great guns, and muskets, and rockets, had not been objected to, although, as a matter of course, the spear of their forefathers was esteemed an infinitely superior weapon. Musical clocks and boxes had been listened to and despised, as vastly inferior to the jingling notes of their own vile instruments; and the Gothic cottage, with its painted trellises, its pictures, and its gay curtains, although pronounced entirely unsuited to Abyssinian habits, had been partially forgiven on the grounds of its beauty. But this last innovation was beyond all understanding; and many a stupid pate was racked in fruitless endeavours to extract consolation in so momentous a difficulty. The more liberal party were loud in their praises of the king and of his generous intentions; and the royal gaze was with

the rest strained wistfully towards the wicket, where he should behold once again the child of his mother, whom he had not seen since his accession, and should make the first acquaintance with his uncles, the brothers of his warrior sire, who had been incarcerated ere he himself had seen the light.

Stern traces had been left by the constraint of one-third of a century upon the seven unfortunate descendants of a royal race, who were shortly ushered into the court by the state gaoler. Leaning heavily on each other's shoulders, and linked together by chains, bright and shining with the friction of years, the captives shuffled onward with cramped steps, rather as malefactors proceeding to the gallows-tree, than as innocent and abused princes, regaining the natural rights of man. Tottering to the foot of the throne, they fell as they had been instructed by their burly conductor, prostrate on their faces before their more fortunate but despotic relative, whom they had known heretofore only through his connection with their own misfortunes, and whose voice was yet a stranger to their ears.

Rising with difficulty at the bidding of the monarch, they remained standing in front of the balcony, gazing in stupid wonder at the novelties of the scene, with eyes unaccustomed to meet the broad glare of day. At first they were fixed upon the author of their weary captivity, and upon the white men by his side who had been the instruments of its termination—but the dull, leaden

gaze soon wandered in search of other objects; and the approach of freedom appeared to be received with the utmost apathy and indifference. Immured since earliest infancy, they were totally insensible to the blessings of liberty. Their feelings and their habits had become those of the fetter and of the dark dungeon. The iron had rusted into their very souls; and, whilst they with difficulty maintained an erect position, pain and withering despondency were indelibly marked in every line of their vacant and care-furrowed features.

In the damp vaults of Góncho, where heavy manacles on the wrists had been linked to the ankles of the prisoners by a chain so short as to admit only of a bent and stooping posture, the weary hours of the princes had for thirty long years been passed in the fabrication of harps and combs; and of these relics of monotonous existence, elaborately carved in wood and ivory, a large offering was now timidly presented to the king. The first glimpse of his wretched relatives had already dissipated a slight shade of mistrust which had hitherto clouded the royal brow. Nothing that might endanger the security of his reign could be traced in the crippled frames and blighted faculties of the seven miserable objects that cowered before him; and, after directing their chains to be unriveted, he announced to all that they were Free, and to pass the residue of their existence near his own person. Again the joke and the merry laugh

passed quickly in the balcony—the court fool resumed his wonted avocations; and, as the monarch himself struck the chords of the gaily-ornamented harp presented by his bloated brother Amnon, the buffoon burst into a high and deserved panegyric upon the royal mercy and generosity.

"My children," exclaimed His Majesty, turning towards ourselves, after the completion of this tardy act of justice to those whose only crime was their consanguinity to himself—an act to which he had been prompted less by superstition than by a desire to rescue his own offspring from a dungeon, and to secure a high place in the opinion of the civilized world—"My children, you will write all that you have now seen to your country, and will say to the British Queen, that, although far behind the nations of the white men, from whom Æthiopia first received her religion, there yet remains a spark of Christian love in the breast of the king of Shoa."

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX, No. I.

CATALOGUE OF EXTANT MSS. IN THE ÆTHIOPIC AND AMHARIC TONGUES.

1. The old Testament.
2. The four Gospels with readings, and all the other books of the New Testament.
3. *Chrysostomos.* Biography of St. Chrysostom, and his exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews.
4. *Kerillos.* A dogmatical work by St. Cyrillus of Alexandria.
5. *Gensct.* A book used in funeral solemnities, ascribed to Athanasius, and stated to have been discovered by Helena at the digging out of the Holy Cross.
6. *Fatha Negest.* The judgments of the kings, or code of laws said to have fallen from heaven in the time of Constantine the Great.
7. *Aclementos.*
8. *Retna Haimanot.* The orthodox faith.
9. *Sena Aihud.* History of the Jews, in connexion with the history of other ancient nations.
10. *Mazafa Filasfæ.* Extract from ancient philosophy.
11. *Henoch.* The prophecies of Enoch.
12. *Gadelah Michaël.* History of St. Michael.

13. *Gadéla Tekla Haimanót.* Life of Tekla Haimanot, the Patron saint of Abyssinia.
14. *Gadelá Sena Markos.* Life of another saint.
15. *Gadela Guebra Manfas Kedoos.* Life and conflicts of Guebra Manfas Kedoos, one of the greatest of Abyssinian saints.
16. *Gadela Lalibela.* Life of the emperor Lalibela.
17. *Masgaba Haimanót.* A dogmatical work.
18. *Synodos.* Canons of the church, attributed to the Apostles.
19. *Antiakos.* Colloquy between Athanasius and a nobleman called Antiakos.
20. *Mazafa Myster.* The principles of several heretics of old.
21. *Mazafa Aoro.*
22. *Mazafa Timkal.* Used in christening.
23. *Mazafa Actil.* Used in blessing a marriage.
24. *Mazafa Keder.* Used for instructing renegades.
25. *Guebra Haimanót.* Read during Passion Week.
26. *Bertos.*
27. *Dionasios.*
28. *Sena Febrak* (*Amháric*). History of the Creation: containing certain fabulous traditions concerning the Creation and the Antediluvian world, said to have been communicated to Moses on Mount Sinai, but not recorded in the Book of Genesis.
29. *Tamera Miriam.* Miracles of the Holy Virgin, wrought during her sojourn in Abyssinia, where she is said to have tarried three years and six months with the infant Jesus, before her return to Palestine.
30. *Nagara Miriam.* Words of the Holy Virgin.
31. *Gadela Hawaryat.* Lives of the Apostles.
32. *Ardeet.* Words said to have been spoken by Christ before his ascension.
33. *Kedasie.* Liturgy of the Abyssinian Church.
34. *Wuddassie Miriam.* Praise of the Holy Virgin.
35. *Organon.* A liturgy containing praise to the Virgin Mary.
36. *Gadela Samætal.* Lives of the martyrs.

37. *Abooshaker.* Abyssinian almanac.
38. *Gadela Adam.* History of Adam.
39. *Kedan.*
40. *Egziabher Neges.*
41. *Auda Negest.* Book for prognostication, forbidden in Shoa.
42. *Gadela Medhanalem.* Life of the Saviour.
43. *Amida Myster* (*Amháric*). The pillar mysteries, viz. Trinity, Incarnation, Baptism, Lord's Supper, and Resurrection.
44. *Temhert.* Extracts.
45. *Kufalik.* Mysteries revealed to Moses on Mount Sinai, not written in the Pentateuch.
46. *Mazafa Graan* (*Amháric*). History of the invader Graan.
47. *Serata beita Chrestian.* Institutions of the Christian Church.
48. *Mewaset.* Hymns for mournful occasions.
49. *Toma Degwa.* Hymns sung during fast time.
50. *Degwa.* Book of anthems, in which all the pieces of the Liturgy that are chaunted are set to Music by St. Yareed, a native of Simien, who lived thirteen centuries ago, and is believed to live still.
51. *Lefafa Zadik.* Prayers and spells against evil spirits and diseases, a book much esteemed, and buried along with the corpse.
52. *Ekabari.* Book of prayers.
53. *Zalota Musä.* Prayers of Moses against the influence of evil spirits.
54. *Melka Michael.* Prayers to St. Michael.
55. *Melka Yasoos.* Prayers to Jesus and the Holy Virgin.
56. *Gadela Apagawi.* Life of an Abyssinian saint.
57. *Gadela Kyros.* Life of an Abyssinian saint.
58. *Gadela Tokani.* Life of an Abyssinian saint.
59. *Kolat of the* 318 *Fathers.*
60. *Maala Saalat.* Prayers and hymns for different hours of the day.
61. *Kuddassie Amlac.* Praise of God.
62. *Mazafa Tomar.* A letter which Christ is said to have written.

63. *Turguamie Fidel* (*Amháric*).
64. *Melka Gabriel.* Prayers to St. Gabriel.
65. *Swasewe.* Book of scales, the Amháric Grammar.
66. *Germama.* Prayers to frighten evil spirits.
67. *Matshafa Fooes Manfasawi.* Spiritual medicine.
68. *Dersana Sanbat.* Life of a saint.
69. *Fekaric Yasoos.* Christ's prophecy of the consummation of the world.
70. *Mazafa Shekeneat*,
71. *Tekla Zion.*
72. *Haimanót Abao.* Doctrines of the Abyssinian church. comprising extracts from the Holy Scriptures, from synods, councils, and writings of the Fathers.
73. *Gadela Antonios.* Life of the Monk Antony.
74. *Zelota Musadod.* Prayers against evil spirits.
75. *Dersana Gabriel.* History of St. Gabriel.
76. *Gadela Georgis.* Life of St. George.
77. *Gelota Monakosat.* Prayers of the monks.
78. *Felekisus.* Book on monastic subjects.
79. *Manshak.* Book of monkery.
80. *Aragawi Manfasawi.* Book of monkery.
81. *Dersana Mahajawi.* Life of the Life Giver.
82. *Gadela Sannel.* Life of Sann.
83. *Sena Aban.*
84. *Kebra Negest.* Glory of the kings. The book of Axum.
85. *Gera Moie.*
86. *Epiphanios.*
87. *Aximanos.*
88. *Bum.*
89. *Mazafa Berhanet.*
90. *Saweros.*
91. *Dedaskalea.* Didaskalia.
92. *Tamera Yasoos.* Miracles of our Lord.
93. *Ankoritos.*
94. *Mazafa Tshai.*
95. *Feliksing.*

96. *Mistera Samai.*

97. *Georgis Wolda Amid.*

98. *Dersana Miriam.* History of St. Mary.

99. *Lik Evangel.*

100. *Fareteh.*

101. *Gadela Yob.* Life of Job.

102. *Thomas Koprianos.*

103. *Gadela Kedoosau.* Lives of Saints.

104. *Gadela Arzemano.*

105. *Raia Miriam.* Dream of the Holy Virgin.

106. *Gadela Abib.* } Lives of holy men.

107. *Gadela Nakod Wolab.* }

108. *Gadela Guebra Christos.* Life and conflicts of Guebra Christos, son of the Emperor Theodosius.

109. *Tebaba Tabiban.* The wisdom of the wise, a prayer to God, recording in poetry the History of the Old and New Testament.

110. *Synkesar.* Collectio Vitarum Sanctorum.

APPENDIX, No. II.

Senkesar, or Synaxaria.

THE CALENDAR

OF THE

ÆTHIOPIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

ABYSSINIAN EPOCHS, AND ECCLESIASTICAL COMPUTATION.

From the Creation of the World until the Council of Nicæa, years are to be counted	5815
From the Birth of our Lord to the Council of Nicæa (325)	317
The Council of Constantinople was held in the year of the World	5873
From the Council of Nicæa to that of Constantinople, are years	56
From the Birth of our Lord to the Council of Constantinople (381)	373
The Council of Ephesus was held in the year of the World	5923
From the Birth of our Lord to the Council of Ephesus .	423
From the Council of Nicæa to that of Ephesus . .	106
From the Council of Constantinople to that of Ephesus .	50
The Fourth Council of Chalcedon was held in the year of the World	5944
——— after that of Ephesus, years	21
——— after that of Constantinople .	71
——— after that of Nicæa . .	127
——— after the *Birth of Christ* .	444
From Alexander to the Birth of Christ	319
——— to the Council of Nicæa	636
From the Creation of the World to Alexander . . .	5181
From the Birth of Christ to the æra of the Martyrs . .	276
From the æra of the Martyrs to the Council of Nicæa .	41
——— to the Council of Constantinople	97
——— to the Council of Ephesus . . .	147
——— to the Council of Chalcedon . .	168

From the Creation of the World to the æra of the Martyrs	5776
From the Martyrs to the Kaliphs	338
From the Birth of Christ to the Kaliphs	614
From the Creation of the World to the Kaliphs	6114
From Alexander to the Kaliphs	933
From the Kaliphs to the twenty-ninth year of the reign of Sáhelâ Selássie, Negoos of Shoa, son of Woosen Suggud	1220
From the æra of the Martyrs to the twenty-ninth year of the reign of Sáhela Selássie	1558
From the Birth of Christ to the twenty-ninth year of the reign of Sáhela Selássie	1834
From the Creation of the World to the twenty-ninth year of the reign of Sáhela Selássie	7332

Praise be unto God, the Giver of Understanding! Amen.

NOTE.—*The following calendar, translated from the Latin of Ludolf, has been considerably enlarged by a comparison at Ankóber with a complete copy of the "Senkesar." The lives of the saints, or the detail of Miracles written against each day, are publicly read in the churches at the service beginning at the cock's first crowing.*

MASKA'RRAM—SEPTEMBER.

FIRST MONTH OF THE ABYSSINIAN YEAR.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Aug. 29.	Sept. I.	**New Year's Day.**	Styled Amedalem, or Auda-amed.
		Melius, or Milius.	He was also called Abilius, and was the third Patriarch of Alexandria after St. Mark.
		St. John, the Baptist.	On this day his execution is solemnized in the Greek and Roman Church; but in the Æthiopian and Coptic his name only, his death being transferred to the day following.
		Bartholomew.	He was put into a bag, and cast into the sea.
		Job.	
		Raguel, the Angel.	
		Abba Malki.	One of the principal men of Clysmæ.
30.	II.	Dasias, Martyr of Tayda.	
		John, the Priest.	Who is also called the Faster, for he abstained from meat and wine.
		Marina, a martyr.	
		Execution of St. John, the Baptist.	
31.	III.	Abba Moses, the Hermit.	
		Abba Anbasa.	i. e. the Lion, because he rode upon a lion
		Synod of Alexandria.	
Sept. 1.	IV.	**Makarius, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The sixty-fourth Patriarch.
		Simeon, the Devout.	
		Tekla, the Theologian.	
2.	V.	Sophia, with her two daughters, Barnaba and Axosia.	Sophia is called by the poet — "Precious stone of the city of Rome."
		St. Mamas, the Martyr.	
		Theodotus, with his wife Theophana.	
3.	VI.	**Isaiah, the Prophet.**	
		Abnodius.	
		Besintia, the Martyr.	

Maskárram—September.

Julian.	Æthiop	Fasts and Festivals	Remarks
Sept.	Sept.		
3.	VI.	Jacob, the Monk.	
		Antimus, the Bishop.	Of Nicomedia; he suffered martyrdom under Maximinian.
		Orontes, Raurawa, Saulas and Sawa, the Martyrs.	
4.	VII	Basilides.	
		Severianus.	
		Agaton, Ammon, Amonius, Petrus, and Johannes, the Martyrs, with their mother Rafika.	Of Rome.
		Elizabeth, daughter of Sophy.	
		Mary her sister.	
		Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	He was the five and twentieth Patriarch, and not acknowledging the Council of Chalcedon, was declared a schismatic, wherefore he is held by the Abyssinians to be a saint.
5.	VIII.	Dimadius, a martyr.	
		Moses, the Prophet.	
		Zacharias, the Priest, son of Barachias.	
		Another Zacharias and Joseph.	
6.	IX.	Abba Bissora, Bishop of Massilia, with his companions Bisacar, Fanabfeus, and Theodorus.	
		Michael.	The archangel, who, according to the Greeks at Colossæ, in Phrygia, smote with a rod, and removed a rock, which the heretics had thrown into the river to divert its course.
		Cyrianus, Bishop.	
		Iassai, the King.	
7.	X.	**Birthday of Our Lady Mary.**	
		Judith.	Who killed Holofernes.
		Matrona.	
		Athanasia.	
		King David of Aethiopia.	Who instituted the feast of the cross in Abyssinia.
		Datrarea.	
		Likeness of the Holy Virgin, painted by Lukas.	

Maskárram — September.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals	Remarks.
Sept. 8.	Sept. XI.	Panephysis.	The name of a female martyr; and also of a town in the neighbourhood of Alexandria.
		Cornelius.	
		The blessed Theodora.	
		Basilides.	
		The three men of Asnæ.	
9	XII.	**Michael, the Archangel.**	The twelfth of each month is dedicated to St. Michael.
		The two hundred Bishops congregated at Ephesus.	
		Aflachus and his companions.	
10.	XIII.	Basilius, Bishop of Cæsarea.	
		Isaac Badasæus.	
11.	XIV.	Abba Agathon.	
		Degana, the Priest.	
12.	XV.	Peter, the Hermit.	
		Martyrdom of Stephen.	
13.	XVI	**Ædification of the Church in Jerusalem.**	That is, her restoration by Constantine and Helena.
		Tobias.	
		Abba Agaton.	
14.	XVII.	Theognosta, the Roman.	Or rather the Greek; she preached the gospel in India.
		Dionysius, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The fourteenth Patriarch of Alexandria, under the Emperor Decius.
		Eudoxius, the Presbyter.	
		Feast of the Glorious Cross.	
15.	XVIII.	Jacob, the Ascetic.	
		Mercurius.	
		Nicetas, the Martyr.	
		Thomas.	
		Helena, Mother of the Emperor Constantine.	
		Eustathius.	Brought a dead child to life.
		Anoreus.	
16.	XIX.	Quiricus.	
		Gregorius, the Patriarch of Armenia.	
		Athanasius, the Patriarch of Alexandria.	There are many of this name; it is probably the second, or the twenty-seventh.
17.	XX.	**Madilama, the holy virgin and martyr.**	

Maskárram—September.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Sept. 18.	Sept. xxi.	**Mary, the Holy Virgin.**	The memory of the Holy Virgin is celebrated on the 21st of each month of the year.
		Justina.	
		Tiberius, the Disciple.	One of the seventy-two disciples of Christ.
		The three hundred and eighteen Bishops.	In the First Council of Nicæa.
		Matthew, the Ascetic.	
19.	xxii.	Cotolas, the brother of Axuus.	
		Julius Akfahasi.	
		Junius, his brother.	
		Theodorus, his son.	
		Aristus.	
20.	xxiii.	**Salama**, i. e. **Frumentius.**	Who converted Æthiopia to Christianity.
		Eunobius.	
		Andreas, his son.	
		Tekla, the holy martyr.	A woman.
		Eustathius, with his wife and sons.	The wife was called Theopiste, and the sons Agapius and Theopistus.
21.	xxiv.	Gregorius and his companion Quadratus.	
22.	xxv.	**Jonas, the Prophet.**	
		Kephas and Saulus.	
		Barbara and Juliana.	
23.	xxvi.	Obolius, son of Justus.	
		Conception of John in the womb of Elizabeth.	
24.	xxvii.	Eustathius.	The same as above, xxiii.
		Thekla.	
25.	xxviii.	Abadirus and his sister Iraja, martyrs.	Abadirus instead of Obed-Edom.
		Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.	These Patriarchs have this day in each month of the Æthiopic calendar.
		Susanna, the Chaste.	
		Enkua Mariam.	*i. e.* the Gem of Mary.
		Stephen, his son.	
26.	xxix.	**Birth of Christ.**	Celebrated twelve times a year.
		Removal of the body of John, the Pure (Evangelist).	
		Arsima and her mother Agatha, with the Virgins.	
27.	xxx.	Abba Salusa.	
		Jacob and John.	The Apostles, sons of Zebedee.

Maskárram — September.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Sept. 27.	Sept. xxx.	Absadius and Aaron.	
		Athanasius.	
		Gregorius.	

End of the Abyssinian month Maskárram.

TEKEMT—OCTOBER.

SECOND MONTH.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Sept. 28.	Oct. I.	Anastasia, a martyr of Rome.	
		Susanna, the Virgin.	
		Martha, sister of Lazarus and Mary.	
29.	II.	Severus, Bishop of Antiochia.	
30.	III.	Theodora, daughter of Arcadius, the King.	
Oct.		Simeon.	The fifty-first Patriarch.
1.	IV.	Ananias, who baptized St. Paul.	He is called an Apostle, and is said to have been made bishop of Damascus.
		Bacus.	
		Papa and Mamma.	
		Abreha and Atzbeha.	These two brothers were the first Christian Emperors of Æthiopia, converted to Christianity by St. Frumentius.
		Guebra-Christos.	*i. e.* servant of Christ.
2.	V.	Cyriacus and his mother Hanna.	
		Admonius.	
3.	VI.	**Dionysius, the Areopagite.**	
		Usifos and Urianos.	
		Antonius and Rawak, martyrs.	
		Pantaleon.	One of the nine Æthiopic Saints.
		Hermolaus, the Presbyter.	
		Hermacletus and Anamæus.	The brothers of the former.
		Paulus, Patriarch of Constantinople.	
		Batzalota Michael.	
		Hannah, mother of Samuel.	
4.	VII.	Cyprianus.	
		Justina.	
		Abba Baula, the Just.	
		Menas and Hasina.	

Tekemt — October.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Oct. 5.	Oct. VIII.	Horus and Agatho, children of Susanna.	
		Metras.	
6.	IX.	**Thomas, Apostle of India.**	
		Athanasius, Patriarch of Antiochia.	
		Stephanus, son of Basilides.	
		Liberius, Patriarch of Rome.	
		Emperor David, of Æthiopia.	
		Sergius.	*Vide* Hedar, xix.
7.	X.	Jacob, Patriarch of Antiochia.	
8.	XI.	**Eumenius, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	He was the seventh.
9.	XII.	**Michael, the Archangel.**	
		Matthew, the Evangelist and Apostle.	
		Demetrius, Patriarch of Alexandria.	He was the twelfth.
10.	XIII.	Ptolemachus and his Brothers, the Martyrs.	
		Paulus and Zacharias, Ascetics.	
11.	XIV.	**Philip, the Apostle.**	Of Cæsarea.
		Moses, the Monk.	
		Guebra-Christos.	*Vide* Tekemt, iv.
		Michael, called Aragawi.	*i. e.* Senex, one of the nine Abyssinian saints.
12.	XV.	Azkirus and Cyriacus.	
		Silas.	
		Bifamon of Nicomedia.	
13.	XVI.	Abba Agathus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The thirty-ninth.
		Macrobius.	
		Petrus.	
14.	XVII.	**Dioscorus, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	*Vide* Maskárram, vii.
		Filjas, Bishop of Tamois.	
		Birth of Hannah.	Mother of Samuel.
		Stephanus, the First Martyr.	
		Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The three and twentieth.
15.	XVIII.	Romanus, the Martyr.	
16.	XIX.	Johannes and Kedwa maza.	
		Jehrah, a martyr.	On the spot where his blood was spilt, there grew up a fine vine.
		Bartholomew, the Martyr.	
		The thirteen Bishops.	At Antiochia.
		Simeon.	
		Elijah, the Prophet.	

Tekemt — October.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Oct.	Oct.		
17.	XX.	**Mary, the Holy Virgin.**	
18.	XXI.	Matthias.	Redeemed from prison by the Holy Virgin.
		Joel, the Prophet.	
		Lazarus.	
19.	XXII.	**Lucas, the Evangelist.**	
20.	XXIII.	**Joseph, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	He was the fifty-second.
		Dionysius, the Bishop.	
21.	XXIV.	Hilario.	
		Paulus and his companions.	
		The holy Zaina, a martyr.	
		Tzabala Mariam.	
22.	XXV.	Abba Abib, the Monk.	
		Julius.	
23.	XXVI.	Timonas.	
		Huras, the Martyr.	
24.	XXVII.	Abba Macarius, the Martyr, Bishop of Kau.	Kau was a town on the Upper Nile.
25.	XXVIII.	**Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**	
		Abba Jemata.	
		Marcianus and Mercurius.	They were disciples of Paulus, Patriarch of Constantinople.
26.	XXIX.	**Birth of Christ.**	
		Demetrius, the Martyr.	
		Sektar.	
27.	XXX.	**Emperor Isaac.**	Of Æthiopia.
		Abraham, the Poor.	

End of the Abyssinian month Tekemt.

HEDA'R—NOVEMBER.

THIRD MONTH.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Oct.	Nov.		
28.	I.	Maximus. Victor, Philip.	
29.	II.	**Sanitius, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The sixty-third.
		Petrus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The twenty-seventh.
		Naakweto-Laab.	The last Emperor of Æthiopia of the family of Zague. He did not die.
30.	III.	**Habakkuk, the Prophet.**	

Hedár — November.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Oct. 30.	Nov. III.	Cyriacus.	Whose dead body remained long uncorrupted.
		Athanasius and Iraeus, martyrs.	
31.	IV.	Jacob and Johannes, Bishops of Persia.	
		Thomas, companion of Zacharius, Bishops of Damascus.	
		Epimachus and Acirianus.	
		Johannes and Abaidus, disciples to the latter.	
Nov. 1.	V.	Timotheus, martyr.	
		Longinus.	
		Removal of the body of Mar-Theodor.	
2.	VI.	**Flight of Christ from Mehsa to Koskuama.**	Places in Egypt.
		Josa, daughter of Joseph of Arimathæa.	
		Felix, Archbishop of Rome.	
3.	VII.	Georgius, one of the first martyrs.	Of Alexandria.
		Abba Rehru.	
		Menas, Bishop of Tamoi.	In Egypt.
		Mercurius and Johannes.	
		Zenobius and Zenobia.	Martyrs under Diocletian.
4.	VIII.	Abba Kefri.	
		The Four Cherubim.	That is, the Four Beasts. Apocalyps. iv. 6.
		Egzie Kebra.	
		Johannes, showing to Constantinus the Cross.	
		Afnen, an angel.	
		Constantinus, seeing the Cross.	With the significant words, "With that ensign thou wilt be victorious."
5.	IX.	**Isaac the Just, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The forty-first.
		The cccxviii Fathers, assembled at Nicaea.	
6.	X.	The Virgins, killed by Julian.	
		Meeting of Priests for the settling of the Epacts.	Under Demetrius, Patriarch of Alexandria.
		Guebra Mariam.	
7.	XI.	**Hana, grandmother of Christ.**	Her husband was Joachim Cleophas.
		Archelaus and Elisa.	
		Menas and his mother Urania.	

Hedár — November.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Nov. 8.	Nov. XII.	**Michael, the Archangel.**	
		Philotheus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The sixty-third.
		Adamas.	
		Seraphim and Cherubim.	
9	XIII.	Ascanafrus.	Cured a paralytic person.
		Timotheus, Bishop of Esnae.	
		Zacharias, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The sixty-fourth; he was besmeared with blood and cast before lions, but remained untouched.
		Johannes, the Priest.	
		Martianus, Bishop of Thracia.	He was driven from his see by the Arians, and, after a long journey, raised a dead body to life.
10.	XIV.	Daniel the Monk.	Who baptized a king of Persia.
		The Maccabeans.	
11.	XV.	Menas, a martyr.	
		Abba Menas, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The sixty-first.
		Dedication of the church of Pachomius.	
		Victor.	
		Sebkat.	Beginning of the Fast before Christmas.
		Jatia, a female martyr.	
12.	XVI.	**Andreus, King, and his companion,**	
		Daniel, the Antistes.	"Who put on angels' clothing," *i. e.* became monk.
		Malacetus.	
		Cerius, called John the Piteous.	At the time of Heraclius, forty-first Patriarch of Alexandria.
		Cistus, a martyr.	
		Dedication of the church of Abunafer, in Egypt.	Abunafer, called Onuphrius in Greek, was a hermit. His church was above Memphis.
13.	XVII.	Abraham and his wife.	
		Harica and Kedoosa Amlac, their sons.	
		The hundred Anchorites in the desert of Watzif.	
		Abba Sinodius.	

Hedár — November.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Nov. 13.	Nov. XVII.	**Johannes Chrysostomus.**	The day of the removal of his remains to Constantinople.
14.	XVIII.	Jona and Atrasessa.	Female martyrs.
		Philip, the Apostle.	
		Eleutherus and Enthia.	
		Athanasius.	
15.	XIX.	Theophilus, and his wife Patritia, and their son Damalius.	
		Dedication of the church of Sergius.	His dead body sent forth an agreeable odour.
		Bartholomew, the Apostle.	
16.	XX.	**Anianus, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The second, successor of St. Mark.
		Theodorus, the martyr.	
17.	XXI.	**Mary, the Holy Virgin.**	
		Gregorius Thaumaturgus.	
		Cosmus, Metropolite.	Uncertain, whether the fifty-fourth patriarch of Alexandria or not. It is said, that the image of Mary shed tears when it beheld his excruciating tortures.
		Johannes of Sijut.	
18.	XXII.	Alphæus, Romanus, and Zacheus, of Asmunaja, with their companions.	
		The children of Theodata.	
		The two-hundred and ninety-two brothers and forty-nine sisters of Cosmus.	
19.	XXIII.	**Obadias.**	Who fed the prophets in the cave at the time of King Ahab. 1 Chron. xviii. 13.
		Cornelius.	One of the seventy-two disciples.
20.	XXIV.	Seraphim.	
		The twenty-four Elders.	Apocalyps. iv. 4.
		Azkirus and Cyriacus.	
21.	XXV.	Mercurius, the Roman.	
22.	XXVI.	**The Martyrs of Negra.**	340 under their leader Aretas.
		Sebrianus, with his sister Tatusbaya.	
		Gregorius, Bishop of Nyssa.	
		Jesus-Moa.	*i. e.* Jesus has overcome: a man's name.
23.	XXVII.	Jacob, the Martyr.	Was cut midways asunder, but prayed still as half a body.

Hedár—November.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Nov.	Nov.		
23.	XXVII.	Philemon, the Apostle.	
		Tekla Hawaryat.	
		Guebra-Johannes.	
		Timotheus, and his wife Mora.	
		Sarabamon, Bishop of Nagos.	
24.	XXVIII.	**Abba Likanus.**	One of the nine Abyssinian Saints.
		Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.	
25.	XXIX.	**Birth of Christ.**	
		Petrus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The twenty-ninth. He kept the people of Mermoken from heresy.
		Clemens, disciple of Petros.	
		Guebra-Maskal.	*i. e.* Servant of the Cross, Emperor of Æthiopia.
26.	XXX.	Acacius, successor of Anatolius, Bishop of Constantinople.	
		Guebra-Maskal, Emperor of Æthiopia.	
		Gregorius.	

Here endeth the month Hedár.

TAHSA'S—DECEMBER.

FOURTH MONTH.

Julian.	Æthiop	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Nov.	Dec.		
27.	I.	Asnadius, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The seventy-seventh.
		Elias, the Prophet.	
		Petrus, Bishop of Gaza.	
		Johannes, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The fortieth; he built the church of St. Mark in Alexandria.
		Auctianus.	
28.	II.	Sadrach, Mesach, and Abednego.	
		Abba Hor, with thirty-two martyrs.	Hor brough a dead child to life again, of whose death he stood accused.
29.	III.	**Mary entering the Temple.**	
		Phanuel, Archbishop.	
30.	IV.	**Andreas, the Apostle.**	
Dec.			
1.	V.	**Nahum, the Prophet.**	
		Eleutherus, a martyr.	

Tahsás—December.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Dec.	Dec.		
1.	V.	Eugenia, daughter of King Philip.	
		Arsima.	*Vide* Maskárram, xxix.
		Johannes.	Called "Ghostly Father."
		Theodorus.	
		Victor, a bishop.	
2.	VI.	Transfer of the body of Arsima.	
		Anatolius, a presbyter and martyr.	
		Abraham, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The sixty-second.
		Simeon.	Otherwise called "Afa Mariam."
		Eliabus.	
3.	VII.	Matthæus, the Poor.	
		Daniel, the Monk.	
		Eulogius.	
		Diontyras.	
4.	VIII.	Johannes of Damascus.	
		Esi, and his sister Tekla.	
		Heraclas, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The thirteenth.
		Barbara.	
		Anba, *i. e.* Abba Marina.	Was discovered after death to have been a woman.
5.	IX.	Saba, a martyr.	Was thrown into a hot oven.
6.	X.	**Theophanius, a Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The sixtieth.
		Severus, a father of Antioch.	
		Nicolaus, Bishop of Myra.	
		Thalassius and Eleazar.	
		Advent of the body of Severus.	
		Sursita of Constantinople.	
7.	XI.	**Pachomius and Bartholomaeus, Bishops.**	
		Theodorus.	
8.	XII.	**Michael, the Archangel.**	
		Anicetus and Photinus, martyrs.	
		Hydra of Syene.	
		Sixty Bishops against Benatus at Rome.	
		Abba Samuel, of Waldubbá.	
9.	XIII.	**Raphael, the Archangel.**	
		Macarius.	
		Barsufius.	
		Abracius.	
		Mizael, a deacon.	Anchorite of the Convent Kelmon.
10.	XIV.	Mermena.	

Tahsas — December.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Dec.	Dec.		
10.	XIV.	Simeon Behor and Menas.	
		Abba, Guebra-Christos, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The sixty-seventh.
		Ammonius.	
		Nasahita, a royal daughter.	
		Arianus, a presbyter.	
		Arshaledes, his brother.	
11.	XV.	Gregorius, Bishop of Armenia.	
		Lucas, the Stylite.	Every seventh day he ate a little bread, the six other days he fasted.
		Abba Jemsah.	
		Eustathius.	
12.	XVI.	**Conception of St. Mary.**	
		Ananias and Cazius.	
		Abba Herwag, a martyr.	
		Gideon, Leader of the Israelites.	
13.	XVII.	Transfer of the body of Lucas, the Stylite.	
14.	XVIII.	Heraclas, the Martyr.	Many of that name.
		Philemon, the Hermit.	
		Titus, Disciple of St. Paul.	
		Salama, i. e. **Frumentius.**	Apostle of the Æthiopians.
15.	XIX.	**Gabriel, the Archangel.**	
		Johannes, the Priest.	*Vide* Hedár, xiii.
16.	XX.	**Haggai, the Prophet.**	
17.	XXI.	**Mary, the Holy Virgin.**	
		Barnabas of Cyprus.	
18.	XXII.	Decisius, of Rome.	
		Anastasius, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The seventeenth.
		Archelaus, Bishop.	
19.	XXIII.	**David, King of Israel.**	
		Abba Timotheus.	
		Isaac.	
		Samuel and his sons Simeon and Gabriel.	Made fire fall from heaven.
20.	XXIV.	**Abba Pauli.**	
		Jeremias, the Prophet.	
		Obolius.	
		Ignatius, a martyr.	
		Fulgosius.	
		Tekla Haimanot.	Who introduced monastic life in Æthiopia.
		Esther, Queen of Persia.	
21.	XXV.	Maccabæi, the martyrs.	
		Johannes Cama.	His fingers and nails seemed burning like candles during prayer.
		Abba Darudi.	

Tahsás — December.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Dec.	Dec.		
22.	XXVI.	Anastasia, a martyr.	
		Juliana.	
23.	XXVII.	Abba Abashadi, a martyr bishop.	
		Abba Hellanikus, Bishop of Egypt.	
		Abba Bege.	
		Philip, a monk.	
24.	XXVIII.	**Feast of Gena.**	That is, Christmas-eve.
		Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.	
		Paulus, a martyr.	
25.	XXIX.	**Birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.**	In 1843, the birth of our Saviour fell on the 5th of January.
		The Kings of Saba.	
		The martyrs of Achmin.	A town in the Thebaïs.
		Korilas and Abba Gize.	
		Acarius.	
26.	XXX.	**The innocent Children.**	
		Johannes, the Master.	
		Johannes, the Woman-hater.	
		Zacharias, a hermit.	

Here endeth the month Tahsás.

TER — JANUARY.

FIFTH MONTH.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Dec.	Jan.		
27.	I.	**Stephanus, the first Martyr.**	
		Dioscorus and Æsculapius, the companions.	
		Leontius, a martyr.	
		Macarius, the Patriarch of Alexandria.	There were two of this name: the sixty-ninth is here meant.
28.	II.	Abel, brother to Cain.	
		Sabela.	A woman renowned for interpreting dreams.
		Hellanicus.	
		Theonas, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The sixteenth, called "Column of the Church."
		Abba Sinoda, or Sinodius.	
29.	III.	**Isaiah, the Prophet.**	Also on the VI. of Maskárram.
		The innocent Children.	14,440 in number.
		Abba Libanus.	Brought water out of a rock.

Ter — January.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Dec.	Jan.		
29.	III.	Adhanius and Astea, his companions.	
		Ammonius.	Also on the XIV. of Tahsás.
30.	IV.	**John, the Apostle.**	
31.	V.	Ausgenius, a martyr.	He interpreted the sign, which Constantine the Great saw in the Heavens, and was beheaded in the 110th year of his age.
		Matthew, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The eighty-eighth.
Jan.		Ausia.	
1.	VI.	**Noah.**	
		Basilius.	
		Abba Moses.	
		Marcianus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The eighth.
		Circumcision of Christ.	
2.	VII.	Peter of Sola.	
		Ephrem, the Syrian.	
3.	VIII.	Adranicus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The thirty-seventh.
		Benjamin, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The thirty-eighth.
		Dedication of the Church of St. Macarius.	
		Malachias, the Prophet.	
4.	IX.	Abraham.	
5.	X.	Fast, called Bahed.	On the eve of Epiphany.
6.	XI.	Synod of Alexandria.	
		Baptism of Christ.	The Epiphany.
		Justus and Guedebus.	
		Anatolius.	
		Johannes, the Elder, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The seventy-fourth · gave so many alms, that of 20,000 denars not one single obol was left to himself.
7.	XII.	**Nuptials of Cana in Gallilee.**	
		Michael, the Archangel.	
		Theodorus of the East.	
		Leontius and Benikarus.	The former also on the I. of Ter.
8.	XIII.	Third feast of Epiphany	
		The Seven Sleepers.	Called Arsaladis, Duomidos, Augameos, Demetrius, Buratos, Stephanos, and Cyriacus.

Ter—January.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Jan.	Jan.		
8.	XIII.	Nacaro.	
9.	XIV.	Mehraela, a martyr.	
		Abhor, her brother.	
		Emraisa.	
		Maximus.	
		Arshaledes.	Also on the XIV. of Tahsás.
		Cyriacus and his mother.	
10.	XV.	Abdias, follower of Elias.	Also on the XXIII. of Hedár.
		Cyriacus.	
		Gregorias, Bishop of Sophorca.	
11.	XVI.	Daniel, the Woman-hater.	Vowed never to look at a woman, as did Johannes, whose festival is observed on the XXX. of Tahsás.
		Ijaluta, mother of Cyriacus.	
		Philotheus, a martyr.	
		Palladius.	
		Johannes, Patriarch of Alexandria.	Seems to be the fortieth, who died on that day, having predicted so of himself.
12.	XVII.	Dumatheus, brother of Maximus.	
13.	XVIII.	Jacob of Nisibe.	
		St. George.	
14.	XIX.	The Behurheans, with their mother Néra.	
		Jafkerana-Egzia.	*i. e.* "Friend of God."
		Dedication of the Church of the Martyrs at Esnæ.	A town in Egypt.
15.	XX.	Prochorus, a bishop.	Of Nicomedia.
		Abeluzius.	
		Behnu, a holy martyress.	
		Abba Nabjud.	
16.	XXI.	**Death of our Lady Mary.**	
		Hilaria, the Hermit.	
		Gregorius.	
		Jeremiah, the Prophet.	
		Paulus and Silas, martyrs.	
		Johannes.	
		Caustus.	
17.	XXII.	Antonius.	Founder of monastic life.
18.	XXIII.	Timotheus.	Disciple of St. Paul, and Bishop of Ephesus.
		Theodosius, the Emperor.	
		Georgius and Mercora.	
19.	XXIV.	Abshadius, the Presbyter.	
		Bifa of Softa.	

Ter—January.

Julian.	Æthiop	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Jan.	Jan.		
20.	XXV.	Petrus.	
		Sebastian.	
		Ascelas, a martyr.	
21.	XXVI.	The forty-nine old hermits.	
		Joseph, the Almsgiver.	
22.	XXVII.	Abba Bifamon.	
		Serapio.	
		Transfer of the body of Timotheus.	To Constantinople.
		Enoch.	
		Suriel, Archangel.	
23.	XXVIII.	**Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**	
		Abba Acauhi, with his eight companions.	In Gojam.
		His eight hundred companions.	
		Joseph.	Was saved out of a fiery oven.
		Clemens, a bishop and martyr.	
24.	XXIX.	**Birth of our Lord.**	
		Xena.	
		Stephanus.	
		Cyriacus.	
		The monks of the convent Zaga-Meclâd.	In the country of the Agows.
		Gabra-Nazrawi.	
25.	XXX.	**Menas, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The forty-seventh.
		Chrestus.	
		Mary and Martha, the Virgins.	
		Tekla and Abjá.	
		Irene.	

Here endeth the month Ter.

YEKATIT—FEBRUARY.

SIXTH MONTH.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Jan.	Feb.		
26.	I.	The Fathers of the Œcumenic Council of Constantinople.	150 bishop.
		Dedication of the church of Peter, Patriarch of Alexandria.	
		Thomas.	
27.	II.	Paulius, the Hermit, of Alexandria.	
		Longinus.	
28.	III.	Jacob, a monk.	

Yekâtit — February.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Jan.	Feb.		
28.	III.	Zeno, the Thaumaturgos.	
		Transfer of the body of Ephrem, the Syrian.	Also on the VII. of Ter.
29.	IV.	Fast of Christ.	Begin. of Quadragesima.
		Agabus, apostle.	
		Zacharias.	
30.	V.	Agrippinus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The tenth.
		Bessoi, called Peter.	
		Nobus.	
		Hippolytus.	Bishop of Rome. Sentenced to be drowned; he did not sink in spite of a heavy stone fastened to his feet.
		Transfer of the bones of the 49 martyrs.	
		Abba Ebloi.	Two different persons.
		Abba Eblo.	
		Ammon and Esia.	
31.	VI.	The body of Hippolytus, recovered from the sea.	
		Abukir and Johannes.	
		Amogi and Athanasia.	
		Maria.	Who bathed Christ's feet.
Feb.			
1.	VII.	Alexander, Metropolite of Alexandria.	The thirty-third.
		Theodorus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The forty-fifth. Anniversary of his death.
2.	VIII.	Christ enters the Temple.	Or Mary's purification.
		Simeon, the Prophet.	
		Hanna, the Prophetess.	
		Elias.	
		Three female hermits.	
3.	IX.	Transfer of the body of Joseph.	
		Death of Barsuma.	
		Paulus with Esi and Thekla.	
4.	X.	Jacobus, the apostle and martyr.	
		St. Just.	
		Cyra.	
		Felo, a bishop of Persia.	
5.	XI.	Belatianus, Bishop of Rome.	
		Leoninus Eulogius.	
		Abba Betra, disciple of Sylvan.	
6.	XII.	Michael, the Archangel.	
		Gallius, a deacon.	
7.	XIII.	Sergius, the Ascetic.	
		Timotheus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The thirty-second.

Yekâtit—February.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Feb.	Feb.		
7.	XIII.	Victor.	
		Eusebius.	Being threatened to be burnt, he was taken to heaven by Uriel the archangel, and remained there for fourteen years.
8.	XIV.	Jacobus.	He resuscitated a dead child.
		Cyrillus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The twenty-fourth.
		Severus, Patriarch of Antiochia.	
		Johannes.	
9.	XV.	Zacharias.	
		Bebnuda.	
		Inauguration of the Church of the Forty Warriors.	
10.	XVI.	**Mary, the Holy Virgin.**	
		Elizabeth, mother of St. John.	
		Death of Moses, the Legislator.	
11.	XVII.	Menas, Bishop of Achmim.	
12.	XVIII.	Abba Abraham.	
		Melanius, patriarch of Antiochia.	
13.	XIX.	Transfer of the body of Martianus.	From Athens to Antiochia.
		Petrus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The twenty-first, successor of Athanasius. This is the anniversary of his death.
14.	XX.	Basilius, Theodosius, and Timotheus.	
		Philemon.	
15.	XXI.	**Mary, the Holy Virgin.**	
		Gabriel, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The fifty-eighth; anniversary of his death.
		Zacharias, Theodosius, and Timotheus.	
		Onesimus, disciple of Paul.	
16.	XXII.	Marana, a bishop.	
17.	XXIII.	Eusebius, son of Basilides, a martyr.	
18.	XXIV.	Matthias and Timotheus.	
		Agapetus, bishop.	
19.	XXV.	Ausanius.	
		Philemon and	
		Lucia, the Virgin.	
		Konas, a deacon.	
		Menas and Elmadius.	
20.	XXVI.	Abu Phanas.	
		Antonius Raweh.	

Yekátit—February.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Feb.	Feb.		
21.	XXVII.	**Hoseas, the Prophet.**	
		Sadok, a martyr.	Was slain with 2008 others, by a King of Persia.
22.	XXVIII.	Anastasius.	
		Eustathius of Antioch.	
		Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.	
		Theodorus, the Roman.	
23.	XXIX.	**Birth of Christ.**	
		Polycarpus, the Priest.	Bishop of Smyrna.
24.	XXX.	The head of John Chrysostom recovered.	

Here endeth the month Yekátit.

MAGA'BIT—MARCH.

SEVENTH MONTH.

Julian.	Æthiop	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks
Feb.	March		
25.	I.	Barkisus, Bishop of Jerusalem.	
		Mercurius, bishop, and his companion Alexander.	
		Methúsalem.	
		Macareus, bishop.	
26.	II.	Gregorius of Roha.	
27.	III.	**Cosmus, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The forty-fourth.
		Abba Berfonius.	
28.	IV.	The bishops assembled on account of the Paschal.	Probably the Council of Nicæa.
		Sophoreus.	
		Hanulius of Terha.	
		Gasma, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The fifty-eighth.
March			
1.	V.	Sarabamon, a martyr.	Also on XVII. of Hedár.
		Eudoxia.	
		Abba Germanos.	
		Guebra-Mau fas Kedoos.	One of the principal Æthiopian Saints.
2.	VI.	Dioscorus, a martyr.	
		Theodosius, the Emperor.	
		Raphael, the Archangel.	
		Antanos and Arkaredis.	
3.	VII.	Apollonius.	
		Philemon.	
		Theodotus, a martyr.	Beaten by the people of Athens.
4.	VIII.	**Matthias, the Apostle.**	
		Arianus.	

Magábit — March.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
March	March		
4.	VIII.	**Julianus, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The eleventh.
		The Seven Sleepers.	
5.	IX.	Andrianus.	
		Eusebius and Amma.	
		Cuetenus.	
6.	X.	**Invention of the Holy Cross.**	First in Jerusalem, then in Persia.
		Abba Alef.	One of the nine Abyssinian Saints.
7.	XI.	Basilius, a bishop of Hermon.	Also on the XIII. of Maskárram, and III. of Ter.
		Theodicianus.	Of Alexandria.
8.	XII.	**Michael, the Archangel.**	
		Demetrius, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The twelfth, also on the XII. of Tekemt.
		Melagius, a martyr.	
		Joseph, son of Jacob.	
9.	XIII.	**Dionatheus, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The forty-fourth.
		Forty Martyrs.	Of Sebaste.
		Makaras, the Elder, and Macarius, his brother.	Of Alexandria.
10.	XIV.	Thomas.	
		Cyrillus Johannes.	
		Senodius.	
		Eugenius, Eugander, and Abilandius.	
		Abba Batli.	
11.	XV.	Sara.	
		Helias, a martyr of the town Ahnâs.	
		Siphoneus.	
		Sclaphicus, and his bride Stratonica.	
12.	XVI.	**Michael, the Patriarch.**	The forty-sixth.
13.	XVII.	Theocritus.	
		Lazarus, friend of Christ.	
		Georgius, Thalassius, and Josephus, the Bishop.	
		Abba Garima.	One of the nine Abyssinian Saints.
14.	XVIII.	Isidorus, a martyr of Ferma.	
15.	XIX.	Aristobulus, friend of St. Paul.	
		Alexander and Agapius of Gaza.	
		N[illegible]elius and Denasius.	
		Askanafer, with his wife Marita and his children Arcadius and Johannes.	
		Romelius and Thalassius.	
16.	XX.	Stratoni[illegible]	

Magábit — March.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals	Remarks
March	March		
16.	xx.	**Michael, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The fifty-seventh. Anniversary of his death.
		Askaranus.	
		6197 Martyrs.	
		Resuscitation of Lazarus.	
17.	xxi.	**Mary, the Holy Virgin.**	
		[illegible]mech.	
		Theodorus and Timotheus, martyrs.	
18.	xxii.	**Christ's Advent in Jerusalem.**	Palm Sunday.
		Cyrillus, Bishop of Jerusalem.	
19.	xxiii.	**Daniel, the Prophet.**	
20.	xxiv.	**Macarius, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The fifty-ninth.
21.	xxv.	Onesiphorus.	
22.	xxvi.	Farius, the Holy.	
		Eupraxia.	
23.	xxvii.	Amata-Hanna, and Amata-Wahed.	Amat signifies "a servant."
		Sufferings of Christ.	
		Stephanus, the martyr.	
		Macarius, chief of the convent in Shihat.	
		The Martyrs of Eshla.	
24.	xxviii.	**Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**	
		Constantine, the Emperor.	
		Helena.	
25.	xxix.	**Conception of Christ.**	
		Feast of the Resurrection.	
26.	xxx.	**Gabriel, the Archangel.**	
		Simeon, the Nasiræan.	
		Jacob, a martyr.	
		Johannes.	

Here endeth the month Magábit.

MIAZIAH — APRIL.

EIGHTH MONTH.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
March	April		
27.	i.	**Aaron, the High Priest.**	
		Silvanus.	
		Macarius, and his sons.	
28.	ii.	Simeon.	
		Christophorus.	
29.	iii.	Johannes, Bishop of Jerusalem.	

Miaziah — April.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
March 29.	April III.	Marcæus and Fekurus.	
		Michael, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The seventy-first.
		Semrata Zion.	*i. e.* "Beloved of Zion."
30.	IV.	Victor, Dacius, and Ermo.	
31.	V.	**Ezekiel, the Prophet.**	
Apr.		Dioscorus, the Silent.	
1.	VI.	**Adam and Eve.**	
		Entrance of Christ into the Feasting Chamber.	Eight days from Paschal.
		Mary of Egypt, whom Zosimus interred.	
		Noah.	
2.	VII.	**Joachim, grandfather of Christ.**	
		Agabus, Theodorus, and Macrobius, sons of Moses.	
3.	VIII.	Abba Timotheus.	
		Agapis, Ariana, and Amonia, virgins.	
		Leba-aragât.	
		The 150 martyrs in Persia.	
4.	IX.	**Sanitius, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The fifty-fifth.
		Zosimus.	
5.	X.	Isaac, the Ascetic.	
		Gabriel, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The seventieth.
6.	XI.	Theodora, the Munificent.	
		Johannes, Bishop of Gaza.	
7.	XII.	Gajus and Esdras.	
		Michael, the Archangel.	
		Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria.	
		Antonius, a bishop, and Lukas.	
8.	XIII.	Jaso and Josephus.	Disciples of Melius.
		The deaconness Dionysia and Gelvas, martyrs.	
9.	XIV.	**Maximus, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The fifteenth; died on this day.
		Abib.	
10.	XV.	**John, the Baptist.**	
		Nicolaus, Bishop of Myra.	
		Alexandra, martyr.	
		Dedication of the Church of Nicolaus.	
		Agabus.	Vide Acts xxi. 2.
11.	XVI.	Antippas, disciple of John.	
12.	XVII.	**Jacob, the Apostle.**	
		Zara Mariam.	
		Melchizedek.	

Miaziah—April.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
April 13.	April xviii.	**Feast of Karab.**	Between Paschal and Pentecost.
		Eusebius, servant of Susneus.	
		Peter, a martyr, along with Abba Besoi.	
14	xix.	Simeon, Bishop of Armenia.	
15.	xx.	Bebnuda, a martyr of Tentyra.	The palm tree on which he was hung bore fruit the very same hour.
		Cyrillus, with his wife and children.	
16.	xxi.	**Mary, the Holy Virgin.**	
		Abrataeus.	
		Isaac.	Of Horin.
17.	xxii.	**Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The nineteenth.
		Marcus, the Rich, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The forty-ninth. He redeemed captives at an expense of thirty thousand gold denars.
		Michael, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The fifty-third.
18.	xxiii.	Georgis, the martyr.	
		Korus.	
		Tzanas.	
19.	xxiv.	**Sanutius, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	See the ix. day of Miaziah.
20.	xxv.	Sarah, a martyr, with her two children.	
		Bebnudas and Theodorus.	
21.	xxvi.	Susneus, a martyr.	
		Jonas of Nineveh.	
22.	xxvii.	Aboon Victor, a martyr.	
		Abba Noda, Zosimus, and Stephana.	
		Martha, mother of Victor.	
23.	xxviii.	**Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**	
		Pistaurus, an ascetic.	Of Maksur. After he was beheaded his body was seen to walk about at Heraclea.
		Melius, a martyr.	
24.	xxix.	**Birth of Christ.**	
		Aristus, Bishop of Beyroot.	
		Abba [illegible]cius, Bishop of Jerusalem.	
25.	xxx.	Marcus, son of Mary.	The Evangelist.

Here endeth the month Miaziah.

GENBOT—MAY.

NINTH MONTH.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
April	May		
26.	I.	**Nativity of the Virgin Mary.**	
		Bartholomew, a metropolite.	
27.	II.	**Job, the Patient.**	
		Abba Esi.	
		Theodorus.	Disciple and follower of Pachomius.
28.	III.	Abba Bessoi.	
		Jason, a martyr.	
29.	IV.	**Johannes, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The fortieth. Held also on the I. of Tahsás.
		Zosimus and Nudas, servants of Victor.	
30.	V.	**Jeremias, the Prophet.**	
May 1.	VI.	Isaac of Tafra.	Red-hot nails were driven into his head.
		Abba Macarius.	
		Abba Ammon.	
		Pelagia, with four children of Esnæ.	
		Abba Bebnuda.	
		Salome, an ascetic.	
		Dionysius.	
		Senodius, the Anchorite.	
2.	VII.	**Athanasius, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The twentieth.
		John, the Liberal.	In order to give clothes to the poor, he took off his own.
3.	VIII.	**Ascension of Christ.**	
		Abba Daniel.	
		John, the Eleemosynary.	
		Maximus.	
		Dionysius, with his wife and children.	
4.	IX.	**Helena, finding the Cross.**	
5.	X.	Anania, Azaria, Mizael.	Sadrach, Mesech, Abednego.
		Abraham, a martyr.	
		John, Patriarch of Alexandria.	There are many of that name.
		Abba Michael.	
		357 martyrs.	
6.	XI.	Paphnutius, bishop of Damanus.	
		Euphemia.	
		Sosthenes and Jektras.	

Genbot — May.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals	Remarks.
May 6.	May XI.	Jared.	
		Tawacelia, with her son Abolius, and his companion Justus.	
7.	XII.	Apparition of the Cross in Golgotha.	
		Michael, the Archangel.	
		John Chrysostom.	
		Isaaus.	
		Jared, father of Enoch.	
		Menas, a deacon.	
		Stephanus.	
		Transfer of the bones of Tekla-Haimanot.	
8.	XIII.	Arsenius, of Rome, who educated the two princes.	
9.	XIV.	Symmachus.	
		Belamon.	
		Abba Pachomius.	
10.	XV.	Four hundred warriors with Menas the Deacon.	
		Newaja-Christos.	*i. e.* "Property of Christ;" an emperor of Æthiopia.
		Nathanael, a martyr.	
11.	XVI.	Jesu Sirach, the Ecclesiastes.	
		Transfer of the body of St. John, the Apostle.	
12.	XVII.	Epiphanius, an Antistes in Cyprus.	
		Lucianus.	A converted Jew. Gave his own garment to a naked man, and received for it another white one from heaven.
13.	XVIII.	**Descent of the Holy Ghost.**	
		Abba Garga, with Abraham.	
		Isidorus, son of Belandius.	
14.	XIX.	Senodius.	
		Isaac, a monk and presbyter.	
		80,107 martyrs with Isidorus.	
		Joseph.	
15.	XX.	**Caleb or Elesbaas.**	A king of Æthiopia.
		Ammonius of Tona.	
		Sedeza, disciple of Ammonius.	
		Behor, follower of the same.	
		Abba Derma, an anchorite.	
16.	XXI.	**Mary, the Holy Virgin.**	
		Aaron.	When he was sick, he made roasted pigeons to fly into his mouth.
		Abba Mardalæus.	

Genbot—May.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
May	May		
16.	XXI.	**Amos, the Prophet.**	
17.	XXII.	Andronikus.	
		Jacob Saragawi.	
18.	XXIII.	Julianus.	
		Julius and his mother.	
19.	XXIV.	**Christ enters Egypt.**	
		Habakkuk, the Prophet.	
		Salome, companion of the Virgin Mary.	
20.	XXV.	Abba Herodas.	
		Acolytus, with 240 martyrs.	
21.	XXVI.	**Thomas, the Apostle.**	
		Arsinoe, a martyr.	
22.	XXVII.	John, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The thirtieth.
		Lazarus, Bishop of Cyprus.	His second death.
23.	XXVIII.	Amata Christos.	
		Gerilos, with 135 martyrs.	
		Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.	
		Abba Mercurius.	
		Transfer of the body of Epiphanius to Cyprus.	
24.	XXIX.	**Nativity of Christ.**	
		Abba Simeon, of Antiochia.	
25.	XXX.	Michael, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The sixty-eighth.
		Korus,	
		Arwa, a woman.	

Here endeth the month Genbot.

SANNÊ—JUNE.

TENTH MONTH.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
May	June		
26.	I.	Bifamon, a martyr.	Also on the XXVII. of Ter.
		Leontius, a martyr, in the time of the Saracens.	
		Joseph, son of Zawl.	
27.	II.	Apparition of the bodies of John the Baptist and Elijah.	
28.	III	Martha.	
		Koreon.	
		Hilarius, bishop and martyr.	
29.	IV.	John, the Ornament of Heraclea.	
		Sanusius and Mary, of Belkim.	

Sannê — June.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals	Remarks.
May 29.	June IV.	Ammon and Sophy. Acronius and Demonasia. Ammonius and Menas.	Martyrs under Diocletianus, burnt in a church.
30.	V.	Abba Ebsoi.	
		Abba Jacob.	
		Marcus, the Submersed.	
		Rifamon.	
		Mercurius.	
		Fek.	
		Ablak.	
		Isaac.	
31.	VI.	Theodorus, a monk.	
June		The four princes of Esnæ.	
1.	VII.	Ashiron, a martyr, and five warriors.	
		Opening of the Church of Mary.	
2.	VIII.	**Dedication of the Church of Mary.**	
		Teemada, and her sons.	
		2000 martyrs.	
		Armenius and his mother.	
3.	IX.	**Samuel, the Prophet.**	
		Lucianus.	*Vide* Genbot, XVI.
4.	X.	Sophia and her daughters.	
		Dibamona, Bistamona, and Warsenopha.	
5.	XI.	Claudius, a martyr.	With eighty-eight companions.
		Dedication of the Church of Jesus in Alexandria.	
6.	XII.	**Michael, the Archangel.**	
		Euphemia.	
		Justus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The seventh; baptized by St. Mark.
		Cyrillus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The sixty-fourth.
		Bazalota Michael.	
		Lalibela, Emperor of Aethiopia.	When yet an infant, a swarm of bees alighted upon him without doing him any injury
7.	XIII.	**Gabriel, the Archangel.**	
		John, Bishop of Jerusalem.	
8.	XIV	Ptolemæus and Philippus.	
		John and Acra.	
9.	XV.	Church of Menas in Marjût.	Menas brought a dead swine again to life.
10.	XVI.	**Abunafer, and his death**	Alias Onuphrius.
		Zaasoos, with Tekweno-Amlac.	

Sannê—June.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
June 11.	June XVII.	Abba Batatzun.	Ate only a few cabbage leaves, by which diet his body became as light as air.
		Abba Palæmon.	
		Abba Garima.	One of the nine Abyssinian saints.
12.	XVIII.	**Dimanius, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	He has many days.
13.	XIX.	Anub Bissoi.	*Id est*, "pure gold," a martyr of Heliopolis in Egypt.
		Tesfa Michael.	*i. e.* "hope of Michael."
		George and his wife Basjela.	
		Arnobius and Petrus.	
		Ashirion and Argenis, and Belfijus, martyrs.	
14.	XX.	**Elijah, the Prophet.**	
15.	XXI.	**Mary, the Blessed Virgin.**	
		Dedication of her church.	
		Timothy, a martyr.	
		Thomas.	He brought to life again a woman who had been drowned in a vessel of hydromel.
		Matthew.	
		Cedrianus (Cedrenus), Patriarch of Alexandria.	The fourth.
16.	XXII.	The sons of Teudada, companions of Cosmus, the Martyr.	
		Paulus, the Hermit.	
17.	XXIII.	**Solomon, the King.**	
		Abba Nob.	
18.	XXIV.	Abba Moses, the Black.	Formerly a notorious robber.
		His seven brothers.	
19.	XXV.	Peter and Paul.	
		Judas, a martyr.	
		Abba Petrus, a doctor, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The thirty-fourth.
		Beginning of Winter.	
		Pilatus and his wife Procla.	
		Dedication of the Church of Gabriel.	
		Joshua, son of Nun.	
20.	XXVI.	Thomas, a martyr, with companions.	
		Dedication of the Church of Timothy in Benhûr.	*Vide* Hedár, xxvii.
		Ananias, a martyr.	

Sanné—June.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
June	June		
21.	XXVII.	**Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**	
22.	XXVIII.	**Theodosius, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	Either the thirty-third, or the seventy-ninth.
23.	XXIX.	**Nativity of Christ.**	
		Marcus, King of Rome.	
		Theodorus, son of Leo, King of Æthiopia.	
		Palladius, Cotylus, Adramas, and companions.	
		Besoi, the warrior, with his brother Nor, and mother Didara.	
24.	XXX.	**Nativity of John the Baptist.**	
		Abba Geranus.	

Here endeth the month Sanné.

HAMLÊ—JULY.

ELEVENTH MONTH.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
June	July		
25.	I.	Calaeus, Patriarch of Rome.	
		Cephronia, a martyr.	Also called Febronia.
		Benjamin and Bejoc.	
26.	II.	Taddaeus.	Was strangled, because he reproved a rich man for his pride.
27.	III.	Mary, a recluse.	
		Seraphim and Cherubim.	
		Cyrillus, presiding at the Council of Ephesus, against Nestorius.	
		Christianus.	
28.	IV.	**Sophonias (Zephanias), the Prophet.**	
		Johannes and Abukir.	
29.	V.	**Peter and Paul, the Apostles.**	
		Caustus.	
		Acrosia.	
		The wives of Agrippa.	
		Deucris.	
		Sakuel.	
29.	V.	Marcellus.	
		The seventy disciples.	

Hamlé—July.

Julian.	Æthiop	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks
June 29.	July v.	The fathers of the monastery Assa.	
		Maskal-Kebra, a woman.	
30.	vi.	**Sutuel (i. e. Ezra).**	
		Almenas, called Paulus.	
		Theodosia, a martyr.	
		Saturnina, a female ascetic.	
July 1.	vii.	Abba Synoda.	
		Magabis.	
		Ignatius.	Bishop of Rome.
		Georgius, a priest.	
2.	viii.	Abba Bessoi, the hermit.	There have been many of that name.
		Cyrus.	
		Aburom and his brother.	
		Atom and Arianus.	
		Misael.	
		Belana, a presbyter.	
		Beimas.	
		Phaulius of Tama.	
3.	ix.	**Claudian, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	The ninth.
4.	x.	**Nathanael of Canaa.**	
		Theoras and Theodorus.	
		Golianus.	
5.	xi.	Johannes and Simeon, martyrs.	This John extracted a serpent out of the womb of a princess.
		Gabriel, Patriarch of Alexandria.	Many of that name; the seventy-eighth.
		Esaias, a presbyter.	
6.	xii.	**Michael, the Archangel.**	
		Abba Hor, a martyr.	
7.	xiii.	Abba Basenda, a bishop.	
		Ammon, a martyr.	
		Dedication of the Church of Besoi.	
8.	xiv.	Prochorus.	
		Isaac.	
		Peter and Paul.	
9.	xv.	**Abba Ephrem, of Syria.**	
10.	xvi.	**John, possessor of the Golden Testament.**	
		Sertza-Hawaryat.	i. e. "germ of the Apostles."
11.	xvii.	Euphemia.	
		Andreas, a monk in the monastery of Lebanon.	Of Debra-Libanos in Shoa, he slew Mafoodi, King of Hurrur.
		Jonas, the Prophet.	
12.	xviii.	**Jacob, brother of our Lord.**	

Hamlé—July.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
July	July		
12.	XVIII.	Athanateus, Bishop of Clysma.	
13.	XIX.	Batalanus, a martyr. Cyriacus, a martyr.	Of Esnæ.
		The martyrs of Latonopolis.	
		Abel of the fraternity of Tekla-Haimanot.	
14.	XX.	**Entry or Purification of Hanna.**	Hanna, mother of Mary.
		Theodorus, leader of an army.	
		Guebra-Yasoos.	
		Tekla.	
15.	XXI.	**Mary, the Holy Virgin.**	
		Uriel, an Archangel.	
		Susneus.	
		Batzalota-Michael.	
		Au-Christos.	
16.	XXII.	Macarius.	
		Therapio.	
17.	XXIII.	Longinus	
		Marin[illegible]	
18.	XXIV.	Nobus.	
		Simeon, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The forty-second; he was poisoned.
		Tekla-Adonai.	Abbot of Debra-Libanos.
19.	XXV.	Mariam Kebra.	
		Za-Yasoos.	*i. e.* "follower of Jesus."
		Abba Carazun.	
		Eutropius.	
		Twenty-five thousand martyrs in the town Atribe.	
		Thekla, an apostolic woman.	
		Dedication of the Church of Merkur in Egypt.	A martyr killed with arrows in Bana, a town of the Thebais.
		Antoninus, Epimachus, Isaac, Hilaria, } Martyrs.	
		Tekla and Amogia, martyrs.	
		Dimadius.	Restored a blind and paralytic man.
20.	XXVI.	**Joseph, husband of Mary**	
		Timothy, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The twenty second.
		Salama.	*i. e.* Frumentius, the Apostle of Æthiopia.
		Samuel.	Rode upon a lion.
21.	XXVII.	Ammonius and Theophila.	
		Bifamon.	
		Simeon, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The fifty-first.

Hamlê—July.

Julian.	Æthiop	Fasts and Festivals	Remarks.
July 21.	July XXVII.	**Ezekiel, the Prophet.**	
22.	XXVIII.	**Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**	
		Maskal-Guebra, a woman.	
		Adronikus and Athanasia.	
		Philippus, the companion of Tekla-Haimanot.	
23.	XXIX.	**Nativity of Christ.**	
		Transfer of the body of Taddæus, the Apostle.	
		Warsenopha.	*Vide* Sannê, x.
24.	XXX.	Mercurius and Ephrem, brothers.	
		Dedication of the Church of Suriel.	
		Paulus.	
		Andreas and Matthias.	
		Timotheus, Patriarch of Alexandria.	Many of that name.

Here endeth the month Hamlê.

NAHASSÊ—AUGUST.

TWELFTH MONTH.

Julian	Æthiop	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
July 25.	Aug. I.	**Joseph of Arimathaea.**	
		Nicodemus.	
		Obolius, a martyr.	
		Truth, Hope, and Charity, three virgins	(Pistis, Elpis, Agape.)
26	II.	Athanasia.	
		Eupraxia.	
27.	III.	**Sophia, Queen.**	
		Simeon, the Stylite.	
28.	IV.	Mercurius, an ascetic.	
		Hezekiah (Hiskias).	King of Jerusalem.
		Abba Matthæus, a hermit.	Cured a leprous woman.
29.	V.	David and his brothers in the land Singar.	Singar was a town in Egypt.
		Abraham, an ascetic.	
		Tekla-Michael, a sacred bard.	
		Philip.	
		Johannes, a military prefect.	
		Julia, companion of Eupraxia.	
		Tekla-Yaroos.	
30.	VI.	Abba Wizza, disciple of Sinoda.	

Nahassê—August.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
July 30.	Aug. VI.	Justa.	Could not be burned to death.
		Maria Magdalena.	
		Dedication of the Church of Herodas.	Herodas was not touched by lions and panthers.
31.	VII.	Conception of Mary.	Viz. by her mother Hanna.
		Aaron, brother of Moses.	
		Peter, the Apostle.	
		Timothy, Patriarch of Alexandria.	The twenty-seventh.
		Ehud, the Judge.	
		Birth of Joseph.	
Aug. 1.	VIII.	Eleazar and Machabæa, and their seven children.	*Vide* 2 Maccab. vii. 3.
2.	IX.	Ori of Setnuf.	Setnuf, a town in Egypt.
3.	X.	Metra.	
		Abba Bicabus.	
		Christophorus.	
4.	XI.	Moses, Bishop of Ausim.	
		Ptolemæus, a martyr of Upper Memphis.	
5.	XII.	**Michael, the Archangel.**	
		Constantine's reign.	
6.	XIII.	**Transfiguration of Jesus on Mount Tabor.**	
		Benjamin.	
		Abba Galli[illegible].	
7.	XIV.	Basilicus.	
		Damiates.	
		Simeon and Johannes.	
8.	XV.	**Dressing of the body of the Holy Virgin.**	
		Christina.	
		Laurentius.	
		Marina.	
9.	XVI.	**Ascension of the body of the Holy Virgin.**	Commonly called Assumption.
		Transfer of the bones of Georgius.	
		Ge[illegible]ar, ruler of Syria.	
10.	XVII.	En[illegible]heus.	
		Acrates.	
		Jacob, a martyr, with his companions Johannes and Abraham.	
		Aragawi.	
11.	XVIII.	**Alexander, Patriarch of Alexandria.**	Vide XXII. of Miaziah.
		Justinus.	
12.	XIX.	Phinehas.	

Nahassê—August.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Aug.	Aug.		
12.	XIX.	Transfer of the body of Macarius.	
		Jacob, a bishop of Æthiopia.	Having returned after a stay of six years in Egypt, he found still the fire on his hearth burning.
13.	XX.	**The Seven Sleepers.**	They have many days.
14.	XXI.	**Mary, the Holy Virgin.**	
		Irene, a martyr.	
15.	XXII.	**Micha, the Prophet.**	
16.	XXIII.	The thirty thousand martyrs.	Slain by the followers of Arius.
		Damianus, a martyr of Antiochia	
		Abraham's daughter.	
		Abraham.	
17.	XXIV.	**Isaac, son of Abraham.**	
		Thomas, a martyr.	
		Tekla-Haimanot.	i.e. "Flower of the Creed."
18.	XXV.	Bessarion.	Crossed a river without getting wet.
		Jacob.	
		Adrian and Anatolia.	
19.	XXVI.	Sara and Moses.	
		Tekla-Salâm, and Agabus.	
		Sarah, Abraham's wife.	
20.	XXVII.	Baaminus and his sister Eudoxia.	
		Samuel, the Prophet.	
21	XXVIII.	**Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.**	
		Abba Bersbaa.	
22.	XXIX.	**Nativity of Christ.**	
		Athanasius	
		Gersimus and Theodotus, ascetics.	
		Irenaeus, a bishop.	
		Transfer of the body of John the Younger.	
		Salama, translator of the Holy Books.	
23.	XXX.	Moses, Bishop of Ferme.	
		Andrew.	

Here endeth the twelfth Abyssinian month, Nahassê.

PAGMEN,

THAT IS, DAYS INTERPOLATED BETWEEN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER (NAHASSÉ AND MASKÁRRAM), THE TWELFTH AND THE FIRST ABYSSINIAN MONTHS, TO MAKE UP THE SOLAR YEAR.

Julian.	Æthiop.	Fasts and Festivals.	Remarks.
Aug.	Pagm.		
24.	I.	W tukis.	
		Eusebius and Pachomius.	
		Incarceration of John the Baptist.	
		Abba Bessoi.	
25.	II.	**Titus, Disciple of Paul.**	
26.	III.	**Raphael, the Archangel.**	
		Serapio.	Sold himself, and distributed t proceeds among the proselytes.
		Melchi-zedek, King of Salem.	
		Zara-Yacoob.	Name of an emperor celebrated for his wisdom, and also of a preacher of the gospel.
27.	IV.	Amda Mariam.	
		Seven brothers, living in one cave.	See Ter, xiii.
		Liberius, Patriarch of Rome.	Was the thirty-seventh pope.
28.	V.	Jacob, Bishop of Egypt.	
		Barsuma.	
		Amos, the Prophet.	
		Abba Magder.	
	VI.		Pertains only on Leap-year, being the year of St. John.

Here endeth the Æthiopian year.

Praise be unto the Lord for ever and ever. Amen.

THE END.

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